

1812



By Michael Fitzgerald



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A TALE *of*
CAPE COD

By Michael Fitzgerald

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TO
THOMAS CHANDLER THACHER,
A LOYAL SON OF CAPE COD,
THIS VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

In this story of Cape Cod during the War of 1812 the author has essayed to give an accurate picture of some of the trials which the harassed inhabitants endured under the guns of the British warships.

The plight of Eastham in those days was that of many other towns on the Cape. The seafaring population of the district was utterly at the mercy of the enemy and all trade was at a standstill in consequence of the embargo on commerce. Deserted by the National and State governments, the sturdy people bore their sufferings with heroic fortitude and stubbornly resisted the invasion of their shores, now meeting the arrogant foe in deadly combat and driving him to his boats, and again, successfully matching their wits against his might, capitulating only when further resistance appeared useless.

The author has had the advantage of many years' residence in the district and the privilege and pleasure of close acquaintance with the descendants of some of the characters in this tale, and, as an interested student of local history and tradition, his researches have instilled him with intense admiration for the virile race that first settled on this historic ground and whose indomitable perseverance and success in the face of almost insuperable difficulties have won the applause of the world.

"Old times have changed, old manners gone," but in the

little towns of the Cape today the sons of this brave old stock preserve many of the salient characteristics of their sires and are not lacking in the spirit which made Cape Cod something more than a geographical expression in the annals of the Nation.

“Hoppy” Mayo, Peter Walker, Squire Harding Knowles and others mentioned in the story were sterling citizens of Eastham a century ago and they were typical of the men who lived in those days; men of keen intelligence and patriotism, graduates of the little red schoolhouses where they were taught to express their thoughts in the clear English which was the language of their Pilgrim ancestors.

In this little volume the author has followed closely the facts as recorded by such writers as the Rev. Enoch Pratt, the Hon. Charles F. Swift and others who have given attention to the story of Cape Cod. The main purpose of the book is to stimulate interest in the study of the chronicles and traditions of the Cape and the author hopes that his efforts in this direction will merit the approbation of the public.

East Brewster, Cape Cod.

CHAPTER I.

The Capture.

In the year 1814 Provincetown was the rendezvous of the British fleet which harassed the Massachusetts merchant marine and levied tribute on the towns of Cape Cod. The inhabitants of the Cape were practically defenceless against the enemy, and though the artillery of the period was of insignificant calibre as compared with the big guns of the present day, the British gunners were able to terrorize the scattered communities of the coast and it was a time of stress and trouble for the good people of Cape Cod.

Added to this, the war was unpopular in the district. The embargo proved disastrous to American shipping and particularly affected the seagoing population of the Cape. When we consider that Cape Cod was vitally interested in maritime pursuits we can understand how the deadlock in commerce was responsible for local discontent. The position of the inhabitants immediately under the fire of the warships was well-nigh intolerable, but their patriotism never wavered however much they disapproved of the war.

One summer day in this troublous year, a large whaleboat emerged from Boston harbor and bore away for Eastham, Cape Cod. The crew consisted of two men, Winslow L. Knowles and Matthew H. Mayo. They were both in the prime of life, typical Cape Codders, and had been masters of fine vessels before the war destroyed the trade. Their whaleboat was a tiny craft in comparison with the stately merchantmen in which they had sailed the seven seas, and the skippers keenly felt their fallen fortunes. They were now at the very nadir of the profession, forced to sneak from port to port in a vessel not much larger than one of the ships' boats of their former commands.

But what was the use of complaining? That villainous British fleet with its barges and light cruisers was never far away. A round shot across their path might at any moment bring them to, and then the Eastham folks would have to go without the goodly supply of food and drink with which the boat was laden.

As they crept across the bay before a light wind the skippers exchanged reminiscences of their long voyages and found satisfaction in relating stirring episodes of their experiences. Meantime, a good lookout was kept for the enemy, but the coast seemed clear with the exception of a small schooner dead ahead. They took her to be a Duxbury fisherman.

"It seems to me, Win, that the "Spencer" must be in Provincetown. There hasn't been much for her to fuss about lately."

Captain Mayo was somewhat older than his companion. He was generally known as "Hoppy" Mayo, the sobriquet being derived from his middle name "Hophney."

"Yes, it looks that way, Hoppy; but you can never tell anything about that frigate. Old Raggett has got a fine ship and he likes to show her off. Shouldn't be surprised to see her at any moment."

"Raggett is a fair enough chap," said Hoppy. "Of course, he has to obey orders, and he's got to do the dirty work planned for him in London; but he's not looking for trouble and if he doesn't catch you in the act he lets a good many things pass."

"Damn this war, anyhow," said Captain Knowles bitterly.

"Yes, Win, damn the war if you like, but it had to come. Why, that last voyage Zeke Bangs made didn't a British man-o-war take four men out of his ship and he dare not kick! These Britishers think they own the world, land and water alike, and 'twas about time to let them know some other people had a few rights."

"Yes, but we weren't prepared for war," retorted Captain Knowles.

"Seems to me we were just as much prepared as we were when the Revolution was started. Good Lord, man, how long do you think we should wait while this bully of the seas was driving us to desperation? Isn't it bad enough to pay tribute to the Algerine pirates? Must we forever be treated as children? Does any sensible person think this American nation is going to remain in swaddling clothes until the crack o' doom?"

The argument continued with unabated vigor until the whaleboat was nearly abreast of the schooner which had been forgotten in the heat of the discussion. Suddenly a round shot plunged into the water and both skippers jumped to their feet.

"What the devil is that for?" exclaimed Hoppy.

"Well, it means that we're caught in a trap," replied Captain Knowles.

And so it proved to be. The schooner which they had taken for an inoffensive fisherman was manned by British seamen from the "Spencer," and was one of many captured craft which the enemy used for operations in the shallower waters of Cape Cod bay. A second shot brought the whaleboat to.

As the schooner approached, the Americans felt all the bitterness of defeat. In Boston they had been told that they stood a good chance of getting home safely. The frigate had not been seen in the bay during the previous week, and they had started with high hopes of a successful run. Now they were in the toils and Tom Crosby's two hogsheads of good Jamaica rum would cheer the thirsty foe! Friends in Eastham would miss the comforting gill which in those days was deemed essential to the perfect enjoyment of life. Altogether it was a most humiliating situation. Here were two of the most successful runners in the business held up by a stratagem which they should have foreseen and which the veriest landlubber would have looked out for.

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What a subject for Peter Walker's sarcastic rhymes! The British bullets and bayonets were harmless compared with the poisonous shafts of Peter's poetic quiver; their misery could be quickly ended by the former, but Peter's undying verse could be read by future generations and Hoppy Mayo and Win Knowles would be the laughing-stock of posterity!

"Boat ahoy!"

"Hullo!" answered Hoppy.

"Come aboard!" shouted the officer on the schooner's deck. They were soon alongside. Lieutenant Fotheringay of His Britannic Majesty's frigate "Spencer" greeted them:

"It is the fortune of war, sirs. You have escaped us many times, but the pitcher goes to the well once too often! Captain Knowles, you and your friend are well known to us. Captain Raggett's orders to us were to get you at all hazards. I hope you will have no reason to complain of your treatment, at least until your case is finally disposed of by the commanding officer of this station."

"We're much obliged, I'm sure," replied Hoppy with a touch of irony; "but what puzzles me is how you happened to get hold of our names?"

The officer smiled as he answered:

"Surely, Captain Mayo, you did not suppose we were ignorant of your existence? Captain Raggett has had intimate knowledge of your exploits for some time but you have eluded him until now. Further than this I cannot tell you at present, but I may tell you that the next time you go to Boston it will not be wise for you to trust every chance acquaintance you meet on the waterfront!"

The prisoners looked at each other significantly.

"Well, I'll be darned!" exclaimed Knowles; "so it was that chap we met at Snow's tavern! Might have known it, too; he was abusing Raggett a bit too much."

The lieutenant invited them to the cabin and treated them handsomely. In a few hours they reached Provincetown and as night fell the schooner dropped anchor under the lee of the "Spencer."

CHAPTER II.

At Crosby's Tavern.

The tavern kept by Master Thomas Crosby at Eastham was thronged on the evening that Hoppy Mayo and his comrade, Win Knowles, were expected to arrive from Boston. Crosby's cellar was nearly empty of the cheering liquor that helped the male inhabitants of the town to bear the hardships of the woeful condition to which they were reduced by the fortune of war, and the fresh consignment which was known to be on the way was eagerly awaited. It must not be inferred from this that the population was inclined to riotous living. On the contrary, the people were of an orderly and peace-loving nature, but the advocates of total abstinence had not yet made much progress on Cape Cod, and in accordance with the custom of their fathers, the men of Eastham were not averse to taking a friendly gill in company with their neighbors who met for gossip and entertainment under Crosby's hospitable roof-tree.

Master Peter Walker, of whom it has been told by the historian that his wit was keen and his learning great, occupied his favorite seat by the huge chimney-place, which, however, was fireless at this season. Master Walker was a blacksmith by trade, and a poet by choice. Selectman Harding Knowles and his colleagues on the Board were there. Much attention was paid to the opinions of Squire Knowles who was a gentleman of great dignity and knowledge of affairs. "Uncle" Jabez Rich, retired schoolmaster, feeling somewhat the burden of his ninety years, sat opposite Master Walker. Uncle Jabez had a wonderful memory and was fond of telling of his stirring adventures during the old French wars. The rest of the company was made up of citizens engaged in various occupations; artisans, farmers, fishermen and

shipmasters. The latter were chafing under the enforced idleness caused by the enemy's blockade of the coast. Captain Jared Iliggins was especially emphatic in condemning President Madison for challenging the might of England on the high seas when the United States had no navy capable of meeting the numerous squadrons of Britain. Captain Jared was a staunch supporter of Governor Caleb Strong of Massachusetts and voted for him on every occasion that the anti-war governor sought office. Partisan feeling ran high in those days and heated argument was not uncommon at Crosby's. However, private opinions were forgotten when it came to presenting a solid front to the enemy.

The township of Eastham was part of the ancient territory of the Nauset Indians. It was settled in 1644 by Thomas Prence, later governor of Plymouth Colony, who, accompanied by the famous Deacon John Doane and a chosen party of colonists, purchased land from the Nausets and made their homes in the locality. These first settlers of Eastham were men of high character. The men who formed the gathering at Crosby's tavern on the evening of which we write were mostly descended from the pioneers who faced the wilderness and the savage in search of freedom to worship God in their own way, and their descendants had inherited this love of liberty and sturdy spirit of independence. Men of pure English stock predominated, but on the features of a few could be traced the evidence of mixed descent. The dark-eyed maidens of the Nausets had not been found unwilling to share the white man's lot, and though the red man had vanished from the district, a dash of his blood remained to tell of some forgotten romance in the olden days. Strong-bodied, self-reliant citizens were these people of Eastham. Their mode of speaking was clear and incisive, denoting a high degree of intelligence. Many of them had acquired in the great school of world-wide experience a polish of manner and a courtliness of bearing that became them well.

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The well-worn arguments on the questions of the day were threshed out vigorously until the night was well advanced. Still no sign of the voyagers and a general feeling of uneasiness as to their fate became manifest.

"Something must have gone wrong with Win and Hoppy," remarked Obed Sparrow. "They should have been here long ago."

Peter Walker winked at Crosby. "Neighbor Sparrow is getting anxious about the stock in hand, Master Crosby," insinuated Peter.

"Well, Master Walker," replied mine host, "Obed has good reason to feel anxious about it, if that's what's in his mind. My last hogshead of Jamaica is running low."

"Oh," Peter put in slyly, "you may be doing Obed an injustice. Perhaps he's thinking about the molasses. Mistress Sparrow is famed for her cookies, you know."

Everybody laughed. "What was that rhyme of yours on the subject, Peter?" inquired Squire Knowles.

"If it wouldn't hurt Obed's feelings," replied Master Walker, "I might give you a verse or two, if only to help pass the time."

"Let's have it, Master Walker!" cried several in chorus.

"Well, neighbors, it isn't very good poetry, but it's good rhyme and it's a tribute to Mistress Sparrow's accomplishments."

Master Walker cleared his throat and began:

This good old town of Eastham boasts
Of gallant men and true,
Who never shirked their duty when
The call of country blew;
Who carried sail thro' many a gale,
To meet upon the sea
The British foe, and strike a blow
For home and liberty!

And foremost in the battle's van
 Bold Obed leads his crew;
 He's always there his part to share
 In deeds of derring-do!
 And when he brings his prize to port
 Thro' storm and flying foam,
 He'll proudly tell he'd conquer hell
 On the grub he gets at home!

Cheers and laughter greeted this sally and Master Walker was urged to continue. Obed was particularly clamorous for the rest of the verses. He loved to hear his good wife praised.

"Aye, it is just like your blood, Peter," muttered Uncle Jabez. "I remember well when Jonas Walker kept the camp in goodhumor that time before Louisburg. We were in the Fourth company of Gorham's Regiment, and Elisha Doane, our captain, used to say that Jonas Walker was the life and soul of the regiment. Colonel Shubael Gorham often had Jonas to amuse the officers when they supped in the Colonel's tent."

"Those were stirring times, Uncle Jabez," said Squire Knowles.

"Aye, Squire; there were fine men in that regiment. I have seen Captain Joseph Thacher, of Yarmouth, go right through an embrasure into the Grand Battery while the bullets were thick as hail."

"You must tell us the story some time, Uncle Jabez. Master Walker might get offended if we don't listen to the rest of his poem."

"It's getting late, neighbors," said Peter. "Some other time I'll finish it."

Harding Knowles and Peter Walker went home together.

"Peter," said Harding, "if Hoppy and Win do not arrive during the night we must conclude something serious has happened. I sincerely trust they have not been captured."

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"I'm afraid that's just what has happened, Harding," replied Peter. "That runner from Provincetown told me last week that the British seemed to be up to something new. He said Raggett hadn't been ashore for a week, and that seemed strange, as Raggett was fond of stretching his legs over the dunes."

"I fear there is bad work ahead for us, Peter. Hoppy is hot-headed, you know, and he'll be apt to give offence to those fellows at whose mercy we are. 'Tis said they are going to levy tribute on the Bay towns, and God only knows how we are to meet it. The Committee of Safety has been considering the matter. Some are for fighting it out; others consider that course unwise as we have no armed force to signify."

"I plainly see we are in a bad fix, Harding, but we can only wait and hope for the best. Raggett's been pretty good about it up to this and if he's changed, it must be due to orders from London."

"That's so, Peter. The National government little realizes the hardship of our position, and even if it did, we have no naval force for the protection of the Cape. The scattered units of our navy are doing great work but the British are in overwhelming numbers. The loss of the Chesapeake last year was disheartening."

"Well," replied Peter, and there was fire in his eye, "you know, Harding, what Lawrence said on that occasion: 'Don't give up the ship!' Keep that in mind, Harding, and we may yet bring the bully of the Bay to terms."

"Let's hope for the best, Peter. Good night."

"Good night, Harding."

CHAPTER III.

Prisoners of War.

After a night of fitful slumber, the captives were awakened early by Dunton, the master's mate left in charge of the schooner when Lieutenant Fotheringay went aboard the frigate. Dunton was a surly fellow, over middle age, and heartily hating all Americans who, in his opinion, were an inferior breed of English inhabiting a semi-civilized land. To him they were "damned Yanks," deserving of neither courtesy nor favor.

"Lively, you fellows; get ready to go aboard the frigate."

Hoppy coolly looked him over. "I guess there ain't much getting ready about it, my friend. You see, we kind o' forgot to bring our Sunday clothes, not expecting this honor."

"I don't want any back talk from prisoners," replied Dunton, sneeringly.

"Is that so?" asked Hoppy in an even voice, though inwardly he felt like kicking the officer. "Well, now, I should think you'd like a little chat, seeing you're so friendly about it."

"Nice pair of scarecrows you are to go aboard a king's ship and meet a post-captain!"

This was intended to silence Hoppy. Hoppy flushed, and Captain Knowles, seeing trouble ahead, nudged his compatriot warningly but without effect.

"Don't know as you're any beauty yourself, Dunton, with all your finery in the way of brass buttons. Ignorant folks might take you to be the king of England himself, but I have met king's officers before now and I know that a master's mate of your stripe is no ornament to a ship's company."

Dunton was furious. "You'll be sorry for those words yet, you damned Yankee smuggler!"

"Maybe so," returned Hoppy. "I'm willing to take a chance, anyway."

There was some time to wait for the small boat to return from the frigate, and from the deck of the schooner the prisoners had a fine view of the splendid harbor of Provincetown, capable of affording anchorage for a thousand sail, as was noted by Bradford when the Mayflower first made the port. Many times had the captives sailed on these waters and to them every depth and shallow was familiar. And yet, notwithstanding the glorious summer morning, there seemed to be the shadow of disaster over the scene. The town had suffered severely from the presence of the enemy's ships. Commerce was completely at a standstill, for the great industry of the place, fishing, could not be carried on under the muzzles of the British guns, and the few vessels left in the port were rotting on the beach. The population was reduced to a state of dumb submission to the invaders and, with the exception of the British ships, the roadstead was a waste of waters.

About fifty yards from the schooner, the "Spencer" presented a sight to gladden a sailor's eye. Her towering masts and trim rigging showed clearly against the sky. Her deck was a-swarm with busy men and her burnished brasswork shone in the sunlight.

"She certainly is a beauty, Hoppy," remarked Captain Knowles admiringly.

"Yes, Win, she is surely that," replied Hoppy. "No wonder Raggett is proud of her."

"Well, he's got about three hundred hands to keep busy and they have nothing else to do but keep her tidied up. If there was a little more fighting she mightn't look so pretty. Still, I don't think I should like this navy life, myself."

"Same here, Win. These Britishers have always had a navy and got kind o' used to the thing, but we have hardly started

in. Maybe in a few more years we shall have something besides a few cruisers and privateers to meet them."

Soon after this the boat arrived and the prisoners were transferred to the frigate.

Lieutenant Fotheringay, courteous as ever, met them at the gangway.

"Gentlemen, Captain Raggett desires your presence in his cabin."

"Well, now," said Hoppy smilingly, "I'll be hanged if it's not a pleasure to meet a gentleman once more, even if he's an enemy!"

"Thank you, Captain Mayo."

"That fellow Dunton might take a few lessons in manners from you, lieutenant. He wants 'em badly."

Before they reached the cabin, Fotheringay stopped them, saying:

"So you have had trouble with Dunton? I expected it, and I am sorry that any unpleasantness should have arisen. However, it is not for me to say anything against a brother officer. Let it pass. I take this opportunity to tell you that Captain Raggett is in a very bad humor. He has had despatches from the Admiralty finding fault with him for not being more active in harassing the shore towns. There is trouble hatching for your people and it will not help matters if you cross him in any way. Captain Mayo, you will excuse me, but I think you are a little hotheaded. You had better let Captain Knowles do the talking."

"Thank you kindly, Mr. Fotheringay," said Hoppy heartily, "Win certainly is a smoother talker than I am; never much of what you call a diplomat, myself. But whatever happens, we want you to remember that we are grateful for your kindness, and if all Britishers were like you, there would be no trouble."

"And I, Mr. Fotheringay," said Win, "repeat what I said

to Hoppy yesterday, 'Damn this war!' And now more than ever when it makes us the enemies of a man like you."

"You are very good to say so," replied the officer.

In response to a knock at the captain's door, a gruff voice bade them enter. Captain Richard Raggett arose from his chair when Fotheringay saluted and introduced the unwilling guests. The captain's keen eyes searched the faces of the prisoners as he motioned them to be seated.

Post-Captain Richard Raggett of the Royal Navy was a stout man of about sixty years of age. "Old Dick Raggett," as he was familiarly known throughout the service, was an officer of the school that gave Britain such sailors as Rodney, Nelson, Collingwood, and others whose names are inseparably connected with the story of England's glory on the high seas. He had fought under his country's flag in every quarter of the globe and for nearly half a century he had served his king with devoted loyalty, always obeying orders no matter what those orders might be. In battle he was unrelenting, but he was never known to press unfairly a beaten foe. He had no liking for his present duty on the coast of Massachusetts. There was no glory in bullying defenceless villagers and he had not exerted himself overmuch in the operations against Cape Cod. But London had reminded him that there was a state of war between the United States and Great Britain and that the government expected some positive results from the blockade of the New England coast. Raggett was stung by the sarcasm of the reminder. He knew his enemies at headquarters were at work to discredit him and he was determined to outwit them at any hazard.

He was, then, in no amiable mood as he addressed the Cape men:

"So you have been running the blockade in a whaleboat? Pretty small business for shipmasters like you?"

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"Shipmasters without a ship, Captain Raggett, and until captured engaged in bringing necessities of life from Boston to our town," replied Captain Knowles.

"By G——, sir!" cried Raggett with the suspicion of a smile, "your people have a pretty good idea of what are necessities of life. I find that your cargo mostly consisted of good Jamaica rum."

This rather upset Win, but Hoppy was equal to the occasion.

"It's like this, Captain Raggett," said he; "there's been quite a lot of sickness in the place, and we old sailors know there's nothing can break up a cold like the old-fashioned cure of rum and molasses."

"Well, I'm afraid the invalids will have to suffer this trip."

"Looks that way, Captain Raggett," assented Hoppy dolefully.

"Now, my men," said Raggett, "you know I have been very lenient about this business. It's not the sort of warfare I'm used to. But it's got to stop now. I've got myself into hot water with the authorities in London on account of my leniency and I don't mind telling you that I don't like being reprimanded by fellows who never went a mile to sea in the whole course of their clerkly lives. But that has nothing to do with the matter at present. Dick Raggett has got orders and, by George, he's going to obey them! I have had scouts out for you for some time, and I'm going to hold you until ransomed."

"Then that will be forever!" exclaimed Hoppy. "There's no one to ransom us, Captain Raggett. Of course, you can confiscate our boat and cargo, and hold us prisoners, but if you fix the price too high for our means, then that fixes us so far as we are concerned."

"I must make an example of your capture," replied Raggett, "because you two are the most daring and successful of all the runners. But that doesn't mean that my terms can't be

met. I confess I admire your pluck and resourcefulness."

"Of course, Captain Raggett, we are entirely at your mercy," said Captain Knowles, "but we have no reason to fear harsh treatment so long as we are in your hands. In the event of our not being able to meet your terms, we stand a chance of being transferred from your ship. Some Cape Cod men are just now in Dartmoor prison."

"You will not be maltreated on the "Spencer," that I can promise. In the event of transference to another ship, you must take your chances with the rest."

"If it would not be asking too much, Captain Raggett, "we should like to know what your terms are?"

Raggett paused for some minutes before replying. His usual good temper was coming back. He saw that the men with whom he was dealing were above the ordinary standard of the seamen of the period, both in education and intelligence, and while he knew just what he wanted of them, he was unwilling to alienate their good opinion of him by any premature announcement of his plans.

"My friends," said he, "I think we had better postpone the discussion of that point until this evening. You must have a look over my ship. I am sure she will please old skippers like you. Mr. Fotheringay, who has given me some knowledge of your standing in your community, will take you in charge. Meantime, permit me to offer you some of this special brand."

The Cape Codders raised their glasses. "Here's to your good health, Captain Raggett," said Hoppy. "Let's hope that this war will soon be over and that our countries will never have another!"

"I heartily join you in that, my friends," responded the British commander. "At the same time, I can imagine the horror of some gentlemen in London if they ever hear that 'Old Dick Raggett' was clinking glasses with two of the most venturesome blockade runners on the Massachusetts coast!"

With a laugh at the thought, he sent them on deck where Fotheringay took charge of them.

CHAPTER IV.

Uncle Jabez Spins a Yarn.

The news of the capture of the whaleboat and its occupants soon became known to the inhabitants of Eastham and the tidings were received with dismay. The loss of the boat and her cargo was bad enough, but the fact that two of the neighbors were prisoners and liable to be sent across the ocean to Dartmoor caused consternation in the town. Then, again, the incident clearly betokened a change of policy on the part of the British. It was evident that the blockade was to be enforced rigorously, and this meant a scarcity of those provisions which the people were accustomed to get from Boston. Rye was plentiful, but anything approaching luxury was out of the question under the circumstances. The Committee of Safety was hastily convened, but after a long discussion the meeting adjourned until some definite information regarding the enemy's movements could be obtained. Messengers were sent to Provincetown with instructions to consult with the selectmen of that place and get their views.

The prevailing gloom was apparent at Crosby's tavern. The gossips were gathered as usual, but there were no jokes going around; even Master Walker refrained from any of his customary sallies. Uncle Jabez Rich occupied his seat in the chimney corner, and as he philosophically smoked his pipe, he seemed to be the only person untroubled by the shadow of hard times.

"You don't appear to be much worried about the future, Uncle Jabez?" Peter remarked.

"The future, Master Walker, has been before me for nearly ninety years but I have never overtaken it. The past is what an old man knows best. The present must be left to the young."

"There have been many changes in Eastham since you were a boy, Uncle Jabez?"

"Aye, Master Walker, many changes, surely. In some ways the youngsters now know more than grown people in my youth, and in other ways our great scholars of today are far behind the men of learning who lived here in the old days."

Peter Walker saw that Uncle Jabez was in a reminiscent mood. The occasion was ripe for stimulating the old man's memory.

"I've heard my grandfather tell of those good times when Mr. Treat was minister. That was before your time, Uncle Jabez. Grandfather was only eighty when he died, but he hadn't your memory."

"No, Peter, few men have my memory, if I do say it myself. I was only a boy at the time, but I well remember the days when Mr. Samuel Osborn was minister. Ah, he was a rare man! It was not his piety that recommended him to his flock, though he was a good man, too. It was his way of doing good. He took hold of the things nearest to hand. Didn't your grandfather ever mention how Mr. Osborn taught the people the value of peat for fuel when there was a scarcity of wood?"

"He used to say something of the sort, Uncle Jabez, but he got Mr. Osborn mixed with the other minister, Mr. Webb."

"Aye, Mr. Webb was one of the best men that ever lived but he had no faculty for practical matters. He had the Middle Parish, and Mr. Osborn had the South Parish. They were always the best of friends, though their dispositions were very different. Didn't you ever hear the story of how the "Whidah" was lost and how one of the two survivors used to come to the Cape for years after in search of the pirate's treasure?"

"We heard a little of the story, Uncle Jabez, but nobody seemed to know it in full."

"I know it in full, Master Walker."

As Uncle Jabez said this the hearers became more interested and drew nearer the chimney place.

"Tell us about it, Uncle Jabez," urged Obed Sparrow. "I have heard tell of that strange man who frequented the dunes of Wellfleet years ago. Nobody seems to know what was his end."

Uncle Jabez was nothing loth to comply, and this is how his story ran.

In those old days, my masters, Eastham was a town of great importance in the colony. From the bounds of Chatham and Harwich on the west, it took in the rest of the Cape as far as Truro. It was the famous corn-raising district of the colony, Nauset being known to the first settlers as "the granary of the Cape." It had many men engaged in the fisheries and some went long voyages to southern lands in search of the vintage of Santa Cruz and Jamaica, bartering the spoil of the ocean for the products of the tropics. The Indians of the Nauset tribe, original owners of the soil, were rapidly vanishing from the earth, though a remnant of the nation still remained. They were a kindly race and lived in peace with the white man. After King Philip's War, the power of the Narragansetts and the Wampanoags was broken, but the colony was still subject to frequent alarms from the French and their Indian allies, who were active in other parts of the state.

Some ten years before I was born, the Rev. Samuel Treat died. He had served the people for forty-four years, and his funeral was the occasion of great grief to all. He was beloved by the Indians. Two years after this, the pirate ship "Whidah" was wrecked during a great storm. One hundred and two bodies were washed ashore and buried on the dunes. Only two of the crew survived, an Englishman and an Indian.

They disappeared almost immediately after they were rescued and nobody knew where they went to. I have often heard my father describe that fearful night. The raging ocean burst through the Cape, opening a passage through which boats could pass. Daylight revealed a dreadful sight. The sands were strewn with the bodies of the dead pirates. An immense concourse gathered from all parts of the Cape to view the scene and, if possible, to have their share of the treasure which Sam Bellamy, the pirate captain, was supposed to have had on board.

Some of you, my masters, may know all of this; all of you may know some of it, but as my story has to deal with the "strange man" who frequented this district some years after the wreck of the pirate, I hope I have not trespassed on your patience by this allusion to the event which was responsible for the stranger's appearance in our town.

Years passed by, and I was a stout lad of ten when I first heard of this man. He had been seen on the Wellfleet beach, apparently searching for something. The scene of his operations was just below the hut of Goody Hallett, on the line between Eastham and what is now Wellfleet. Goody Hallett lived alone. She was old and most people regarded her as a witch, but this was probably because she kept much to herself. She was expert at the spinning-wheel and ostensibly supported herself by this industry. She never asked charity, though people wondered how so old a woman could earn enough to keep her from want. She courted seclusion, and the situation of her small dwelling, far removed from the prying eyes of neighbors, favored this. A tall, thin woman, with dark features strongly telling of Indian blood, her appearance went far to confirm the idea that she rode the broomstick and could work charms. She was not a native of this place. It was said she belonged to a distant part of the Cape, beyond Yarmouth, and she arrived in Eastham soon after the wreck of the "Whidah."

The stranger was described as a man of fierce aspect. His beard and mustachios were originally coal-black but time had whitened the pointed ends. His face was scarred in many places. Those who brought the news of his presence said that when he discovered that he was being watched his features were contorted with passion and his expression was that of the Evil One. Allowing for some exaggeration on the part of the frightened beholders, there could be no doubt but that this stranger of forbidding mien desired to avoid the observation of the inhabitants while he pursued his mysterious search of the sands.

One evening in the late Fall, when the first snowflakes began to whiten the ground, my father and I had made all snug for the night and were leaving the barn when we heard the sound of a horse's hoofs approaching the house. Soon the way-farer entered the yard and a cheerful voice greeted us.

"Give ye good e'en, Goodman Rich! Like a careful husbandman thou hast made thy beasts comfortable. Now, in the hospitality of thy heart, couldst thou find place below the salt for a weary guest at the bounteous feast which awaits thee? And how is my young friend Jabez?"

It was the Rev. Mr. Osborn. My father gave him hearty welcome, bade him dismount and enter. He stabled the horse while the minister was made welcome by my mother. Soon we were seated at table and Mr. Osborn continually praised the good things which my mother had set before us, a fact which pleased her greatly.

He was a man of genial temperament, free-spoken and always ready for his joke. Some of the stricter members of the South Parish church did not like his easy ways, but he had done much good among the people and, as yet, the mutterings of his enemies were scarcely heard. He had come from Ireland in the early years of the century and he had some of the faults

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as well as many of the virtues of his native land. His views on Christianity were broad; in fact, too broad for the elders of his church, as was afterward shown by his dismissal from the parish after trial by an ecclesiastical court. He had rejected the Calvinism in which his congregation had been reared. But he was a great man, and from him I learned many of the lessons which formed part of my equipment as schoolmaster in after years. He retained much of the old manner of speech which was then giving place to the modern form.

"I have been to Truro to see my good friend Mr. Avery, Goodman, and I dallied on my way home, so that is the reason of my forcing myself on your hospitality for the night."

"You are heartily welcome, Mr. Osborn," said my mother. "The guest-chamber is all prepared."

"Aye, goodwife, I well knew I should not find thy hospitable mansion unprepared. My friend Mr. Avery is not in the best of health. In the course of his exacting ministerial duties he caught a chill, but it is not serious. One of the best and most Godly of men and a true father to his spiritual children."

"He is no better than yourself, sir!" exclaimed my mother.

The minister smiled somewhat sadly. "I fear me much, goodwife, that I can never reach the higher altitudes of sanctity where these saintly men live. The even tenor of their ways is never troubled by the doubts which sometimes harass mine. Perchance it is because I have seen so much of the evil of intolerance in my own country that I am sick at heart to see it powerful in this great new land. I have offended the elders of the South Parish by mildly hinting that the good Lord might even look with favor on a Papist if the misguided brother was honest in his interpretation of the Master's will."

"But," he continued, "let us not spoil this happy occasion by theological discussion. I had quite an adventure on my way to Truro last night. Strange things are happening in our midst,

Goodman Rich. Dost wish to hear what befell me?"

"Aye, sir, and if you please," answered my father. "But before you commence, the goodwife will mix you a brew from the last wreck."

My mother was skilled in the art of concocting a life-giving draught based on the Jamaica which came ashore from the wreck of the brig "Mary," and soon we were listening to the minister's tale which I give in our own speech.

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CHAPTER V.

Uncle Jabez Spins A Yarn. (continued)

You know where Goody Hallett lives, Goodman Rich? It is a lonely spot. After spending an hour last evening with your beloved pastor, Mr. Webb, I resumed my journey to Truro just as the shades of evening were gathering, expecting to reach Mr. Avery's in time for his usually late supper. Before I had gone very far, my horse showed a slight lameness and I was, perforce, obliged to travel at a slow pace. Night comes on rapidly at this season and it was very dark when I reached the confines of Billingsgate. I had long since left the thickly populated district behind and I guided my horse carefully over the dunes as I was not sure of the way, not having been accustomed to traveling by night in that region of the Cape. An occasional star gleamed fitfully through the cloud rifts, but there was no other light to be seen on either hand. The booming of the ocean to my right told me that my direction was northerly and I felt sure I had not lost my way. Suddenly I heard voices and I stopped my horse. Peering through the inky darkness I discerned a faint glimmer about fifty yards from me, as I judged. I wondered what the light meant as I was certain the locality was uninhabited. Hitching my horse to a tree, I cautiously approached the light, the voices becoming more distinct as I advanced. Then I realized that I was in the vicinity of Goody Hallett's hut, but as I knew she lived alone I was at a loss to account for the altercation which was in progress.

About ten yards from the hut I stopped and listened. Goody Hallett had a guest, and, judging by his expressions, one who was not of this neighborhood. I could now plainly hear all that was said and strange indeed was the impression conveyed to my mind by the fierce tones in which the man spoke to the old woman.

"It is no use trying to fool me longer, Mother Hallett. I have been to many ports since that dread night, but I mind me well where the booty was secreted. You say you found but little; that it must have been found by these swinish lubbers who dwell on this God-forsaken sandbank. They thought they buried me with the rest of the gallant rovers when the old ship went to pieces under us, but they little knew who was the fellow-survivor of your relative, Indian Tom! We disappeared, they said. Truly, Mother Hallett, we did disappear, but not on that morning, as they thought. Indian Tom knew how to hide and to provide food, so we stayed for days unknown to the wreckers who were unable to think of anything but Sam Bellamy's gold! They didn't find it, the swine! Indian Tom knew his orders better than that. Give me some more rum, old hag!"

Through the small window of the hut I saw the tall figure of Goody Hallett pass between me and the light. She soon returned, evidently with the liquor demanded by the man, as the clinking of glasses told me that he was helping himself to the generous fluid.

Then I heard Goody Hallett say in her shrill voice: "I tell you, pirate, that I found only a small part of the gold and silver in the place where Indian Tom told me he had hidden the treasure. He died the night after he came home to his people. I was the last person that saw him alive. In his last moments he confided the secret to me."

"And you started post-haste to this place, I'll be bound!" exclaimed the man fiercely. "Yes, old witch, I heard the story from the lips of your nephew when I sought traces of Indian Tom last month. It was also rumored that Tom died of poison!"

The old woman laughed mockingly. "The fools! Why should anybody poison poor Tom when we were all glad to see him home again after his years of voyaging with you?"

"Perhaps somebody had an interest in poisoning Tom? I

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should better know why if I knew whether he told you about the treasure before or after he fell sick?"

"Dog of a pirate! Dare you insinuate that I had aught to do with the death of my uncle's son?" Her voice was almost a shriek as she flung this at him.

"Ho, softly, Mother Hallett, softly, I say!" The man was somewhat disconcerted by the old woman's rage. "Come," he continued, "let's clink our glasses once again to pledge our friendship. We are the only ones who now can tell where the treasure was hidden and together we must find it. Let me sing you one of my old sea songs. Ah, that's a better spirit, Mother Hallett! Now I'll give you a stave."

In a roaring tone he started to sing. It was a wild song of the rover's life and the singer flung his whole soul into the performance. I can remember the first stanza, which he repeated several times as if it were a kind of refrain. This was how it went:

"Sing ho, my lads, for Bellamy bold,
For he is king of the main!
He's filled the hold with yellow gold
From the galleons of Spain.
Then bear away by the light of the moon,
We carry a rover's freight—
Sing ho, for the gleam of a yellow doubloon
And the chink of pieces of eight!
Sing ho, etc."

There were several verses in the same spirit telling of fair-haired and blue-eyed maids in Bristol town awaiting the home-coming of the rover who, however, was well content to lavish his wealth on the darker-hued sirens whose flashing eyes welcomed him to the bowers of love in the sunny isles of the southern seas.

The effect of the song was to restore good feeling between

the pair and the subsequent discussion was free from acrimony. They talked about the treasure. Goody Hallett insisted that the sea must have encroached on the spot where it was hidden, and scattered it. The shifting sands then covered it. She admitted having recovered some of it and expressed her willingness to share with her guest. On his part, he urged that now was the time to settle; he must be leaving immediately as his ship awaited him in Boston and he would be absent for a long time. Goody Hallett agreed to this. There was some little haggling over the division of the spoil, but the man appeared convinced that the old woman was telling the truth and accepted what she gave him. He promised to revisit the place at the end of the voyage and resume the search for the lost treasure. Then the light was put out and all was silence.

Filled with astonishment at this strange occurrence, I mounted my horse and continued my journey to Mr. Avery's. 'Twas very late when I arrived but I found my friend sitting up. The saintly minister was much alarmed and astonished when I told him of my adventure. He had heard some talk about this strange man but put it down to idle gossip.

Together we rode to Goody Hallett's hut next day, but there was no trace of the stranger, and the old woman vehemently denied that any such person had ever been there!

"Now, Goodman Rich, what do you think of it?" asked the minister when he had finished.

My father acknowledged that he had heard of the man's presence in the neighborhood. He believed him to be the Englishman who was one of the survivors of the "Whidah" wreck; in fact, the minister's story confirmed this. Perhaps he was Sam Bellamy himself? As to that, however, he was present at the burial of the drowned pirates and he remembered one corpse being identified as that of the pirate captain.

Next morning the minister went his way after profusely thanking my parents for their hospitality.

In the five years following the departure of the stranger many things happened. Mr. Osborn had been dismissed from the South Parish and he left the district, never to return. Time will do justice to the memory of this gifted man whose broad views were so much misunderstood by his contemporaries. To me he had always shown marked favor, and I loved to hear him speak of the noted men of letters he had known in the Old World. He told me many anecdotes of Jonathan Swift, the famous Dean of St. Patrick's, and he used to read for me passages from the works of that brilliant but erratic churchman. That Mr. Osborn had a liking for such literature was not the least of his offences in the eyes of the stern elders of his parish.

The incident of the strange man was almost forgotten, except by those who, like myself, had heard the minister's story. My father and I often talked it over and the facts were indelibly fixed in my young mind. Goody Hallett was still alive, but she was now feeble and those who visited her hut with wool for the spinning reported that her mental faculties were getting weak; at least, so they inferred from her garrulity and the strange talk she indulged in.

I was now a lusty youth, of great assistance to my father in his labors and skilled in all the craftsmanship which the young men of the time were supposed to know. My mother was desirous that I should go to Harvard college, but we were not well off in the world's goods and my father was beginning to feel the effects of his laborious life, so that project came to nothing. The most we could hope for from my attainments as a scholar was the position of teacher in the district school when I grew to man's estate. Not until I was in my fortieth year was this ambition of my mother realized, and then the good woman had been long in her grave.

One evening in the early spring, a traveler called at our door and asked for refreshment. I was alone with my mother at the time and I took particular notice of the man as he partook of the food given him. His beard was grey and bushy, growing nearly to his eyes. I had never before seen a man wear a beard in such fashion. His nose was large and hooked and there was a fierce glitter in his eyes. However, he was very civil. He told us that he was bound for Truro where he had friends. In leaving, he raised his hat, and this movement revealed a broad scar across the upper part of his forehead. Seeing that I had observed the mark, the man hastily drew his hat over his eyes and departed.

Next day I set out for Goody Hallett's with a bundle of wool which my mother wanted spun. I had not given much thought to the visit of the traveler to our house, but still, somehow, I couldn't altogether dismiss it from my mind. The fierceness of his eyes and the broad scar on his forehead had stirred some memories of the minister's tale, and as I brought my horse to a stop at Goody Hallett's hut I had an indescribable feeling that I was to see this man again, and that I should find him to be the pirate.

There was no answer to my knock. This I thought strange as Goody Hallett was seldom known to leave her dwelling. It was the early afternoon and the day was fine, so, finding that my repeated knocking gained me no admittance I came to the conclusion that the old woman was not at home. I determined to await her return. I deposited my bundle of wool on the doorstep and tied my horse to a nearby tree; then I strolled over the dunes to the ocean side where I could view the passing ships. I took a seat on the edge of the cliff and leisurely surveyed the restless bosom of the Atlantic and listened to the thunder of the surf at my feet. At times I fancied I heard voices, but the booming of the combers was so loud that nothing else could be

heard distinctly. All at once a piercing shriek rang out above all other sounds and I started to my feet. It came from directly below where I stood. Mightily afraid as I was, I could not resist the temptation of peering over the bank, and there I saw a sight, my masters, which froze the blood in my veins! Old Goody Hallett was lying on her back, her throat cut from ear to ear, and, standing over her, one foot on her chest, was our guest of the day before. He brandished a bloody knife in his right hand while his left hand was pointed in mockery at the prostrate body of his victim. Although almost paralyzed with horror, I watched him. He was evidently muttering curses on the dead woman but I could not catch his words. Then he drove the knife deep into her heart and left the weapon in the wound. Retreating a few paces from the body, he shook his fist at it, at the same time his terrible voice resounded above the roar of the breakers:

"Accursed hag! lie there for the birds to peck at! Sam Bellamy's knife has stung better women than you and death at his hands is too noble an ending for your life of deceit. Sam Bellamy's own time has come, but he will get release from his troubles beneath the waves which he has ruled and on the spot where his gallant shipmates met their fate! Fare ye well, old witch!"

With his fiendish laughter ringing in my ears I rushed from the place, mounted my horse and galloped furiously to the village with the dreadful tidings.

The alarm soon spread and the whole neighborhood was aroused. Armed men searched the country for the pirate, but without avail. A few days after the funeral of Goody Hallett, his body was cast up by the sea on the very sands where the corpses of his fellows were found.

The hut of the old spinner was ransacked for evidence to clear up the affair, but only a few paltry coins were found.

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There was absolutely nothing to explain the mystery. The place was then destroyed by fire, and for many years timid folks avoided the spot. It was surmised that the pirate suspected the woman of playing him false and that he forced her to accompany him to the place where the treasure was hidden by Indian Tom and himself. Finding no trace of it, he slaughtered his companion and then committed suicide by drowning. It is well known, however, that curious coins were sometimes picked up in the vicinity during the years following the tragedy, but the bulk of the treasure could not be traced.

And now, my masters, you have heard me tell of a matter which I seldom mention. If an old man's tale has kept you too long from your firesides, I crave pardon.

CHAPTER VI.

The Committee of Safety.

The Committee of Safety was in session. This important body was composed of the Selectmen of Eastham. In cases of extreme emergency the town fathers were empowered to call the leading citizens into council, and on this occasion there was a full attendance of representative men ready to hear the report of the messengers who had been sent to Provincetown for tidings of the captives.

Chairman of Selectmen, Obed Knowles, presided, and with him on the bench were his colleagues, Samuel Freeman and Harding Knowles, Esquires. Captain Heman Smith, who represented the town in the General Court of the Commonwealth, was courteously given a seat with these notables, while the others had to be content with the "forms" on the floor of the town house.

The opening formalities having been gone through, the chairman called on the messengers to come forward and tell their story. Master Timothy Cole acted as spokesman for his companions.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "we have, indeed, bad news to tell. Hoppy and Win are prisoners, sure enough, and it is known that Captain Raggett is to hold them for a heavy ransom, failing which, they will be transferred to another ship and sent to England. This, we understand, means that they are destined for imprisonment in Dartmoor."

"That certainly is bad news, Timothy," said the chairman. "What is the opinion in Provincetown about the new policy of Captain Raggett?"

"Well, Mr. Chairman, they say he is in very bad humor. A sloop arrived from England about three weeks ago and it is

thought she brought fresh instructions to Raggett. Before she came, the British sailors were frequently ashore and behaved very civilly, leaving quite a lot of money in the town in the way of trade with the people. The town is in a bad state and this trade was a great help. The people say they are in a worse condition than the other Bay towns, for the British ships cannot approach such places as Eastham, Brewster, or Orleans closely on account of the shallow waters and the sand bars, whereas, the harbor of Provincetown is always open water and a fine anchorage for all kinds of craft. From what we observed they are sorely pressed."

"Is there no communication with the British allowed now, Timothy?"

"Very little, Mr. Chairman, but Master Jonathan Cook, of the Committee of Safety, told me what he had gathered about the capture of Win and Hoppy and how they were held for ransom."

"Did Master Cook know anything about the terms of ransom?" inquired Squire Knowles.

"No, squire, he had heard no particulars. However, he told us that Win and Hoppy were being treated with great civility by Captain Raggett. They had been seen on deck in company with one of the officers and apparently on very friendly terms with him."

"Very likely Captain Raggett appreciated highly that part of the whaleboat's cargo which was consigned to Master Thomas Crosby." This sally of Peter Walker caused even the town fathers to smile.

"Well, Master Walker," said Timothy, "there is certainly a great scarcity of good refreshment in Provincetown. We treated Master Cook and his fellow-members of the committee to a little of what we had with us, and they told us that since the

sailors had been deprived of shore leave there was nothing like it in the town."

"Then the worthy citizens will be glad to see you again, Timothy," replied Peter.

After this the discussion became general. It was felt that in the absence of definite information from the "Spencer" about Captain Raggett's terms there was no use in formulating plans to aid the captives. A false move might have the effect of further complicating the situation. It was evident that no help could be obtained from the distressed people of Provincetown. That unfortunate town had been the greatest sufferer from the depredations of the British during the Revolutionary struggle, when the majority of the inhabitants, finding the conditions intolerable, fled from the place and sought refuge further inland. At the conclusion of hostilities they returned to their ruined homes and valiantly set to work to regain their former prosperity. In this they succeeded. The straggling town near the tip-end of the Cape was once more a hive of industry, notable for its hardy and venturesome seamen, when the proclamation of the embargo by President Jefferson again set back the hands of the clock. From that time until the peace of 1815, it was the old story of ruined trade and constant suffering, their very lives dependent on the caprice of the haughty foe whose splendidly equipped warships lay within a few hundred yards of the town, and whose guns were ever ready to reduce the settlement to ruins on the slightest pretext. Still, the people hated to leave and they bravely bore their misfortunes, hoping and praying for the day when the God of battles should once again decide the contest in favor of their beloved country.

All this was well known to the gathering in the town house. In the midst of their own troubles, the people of Eastham deeply sympathized with their less fortunate compatriots of Provincetown.

As the discussion continued, various schemes for getting into communication with the prisoners were proposed and rejected. Some were for boldly going to the "Spencer" and having the matter out with Raggett. The wiser heads opposed this. What was the use of running the risk of being added to the list of prisoners? There was nothing to prevent Raggett from holding the envoys and demanding ransom for their release.

"I think that's a sensible view to take of it, Mr Chairman," said Peter Walker. "For my part, I'm very sure that Hoppy Mayo's brain is hard at work trying to devise means to outwit the British. You surely don't imagine that Hoppy's nimble wit has failed him all of a sudden? Any man who succeeded in disposing of a spavined mare as a sound horse, and that to a minister of the Gospel, sleeps with one eye open when he's in the hands of the enemy!"

The Rev. Philander Shaw, minister of the Congregational church, had, a few minutes previously, joined the meeting, and as he was the victim of Hoppy's horse-trade, there was loud laughter at Peter's remark. The genial minister joined in the merriment and when it subsided, remarked goodhumoredly:

"I'm afraid, Mr. Chairman, Master Walker thinks as little of my judgment of horseflesh as he does of my preaching."

This was a gentle thrust at Peter's irregular attendance at church. Indeed, it was general knowledge that Master Walker had written some verses sarcastically insinuating that the ministers of the period were in no way the equals of the great men whose cure of souls had been the glory of ancient Eastham.

There was renewed laughter, this time at the expense of the redoubtable Peter.

"Master Walker will have his joke, reverend sir," said Squire Harding Knowles with mock severity, "but we sadly want someone to enliven us at present."

"No offence, Squire Knowles," replied the minister heartily;

"no offence at all. With all his joking, it seems to me that Master Walker has given us a hint of great value in our present dilemma. Until we devise some means of communicating with our imprisoned neighbors, I think we may assume that they are not idle on their own behalf. Perhaps we had better wait yet awhile for tidings."

"I agree with Mr Shaw," said Captain Heman Smith. "It seems natural to think that if Captain Raggett wants a ransom he must send word ashore to the prisoners' friends."

"Aye, that's the logical way of looking at it," assented the chairman. "They certainly cannot be ransomed with whatever property Captain Raggett has already taken from them. The whaleboat and cargo are in his possession, but it seems he does not consider them as other than the spoils of war. We should hear from him soon unless he intends to hold our neighbors for some other purpose."

"His intention may be to add them to his own crew," said Selectman Freeman. "This practice is common with the British when they capture an American vessel, and it goes hard with the American seaman who refuses to obey; I have heard of flogging and other cruel punishments being inflicted on such unfortunates."

"Hoppy Mayo and Win Knowles will never turn traitors to their own flag," asserted Peter Walker.

This was greeted with approval. That either of the prisoners should fight against his country, no matter what the penalty of refusal might be, was not to be thought of by any Eastham man.

"Don't see what he wants them for, then," cried Obed Sparrow. "He has idle men enough on his hands already. Why, there's nothing for his crew to do now as there are no boats running since the whaleboat was taken."

"Well, Neighbor Sparrow, that's very true; but if Captain

Raggett is holding our friends for any ulterior purpose, we should very much like to know what that purpose is. How we are going to find out is the puzzle." As the chairman said this he looked around the hall as if seeking enlightenment.

But there was none forthcoming. Every avenue through which information could be obtained seemed closed, and the hopelessness of further effort was apparent to all. The discussion lagged and the people were on the point of dispersing when the strains of a fife were heard. The musician was still at a considerable distance from the town house, but Master Peter Walker had heard the tune before, so he said:

"That's Phil the Fifer coming around again on his journey through the Cape. I wonder what trade the old man expects to pick up these hard times?"

Then a sudden idea seemed to possess Peter and, jumping to his feet, he startled the meeting by exclaiming:

"By the Lord! I have it. Why not send old Phil to Provincetown for information? He can get it if anyone can. He is a great favorite with the crews of the warships. They buy his small wares and dance to his music. He has often told me what free spenders they are when they have money. They think that he is not quite right in the head, but that's where old Phil fools them! You all know, neighbors, that the old pedler is true as steel to the cause. What do you say to the proposition, Mr. Chairman?"

"Well, Peter," answered the chairman, "the idea looks all right to me, but would Phil care about the risk now that the British are getting aggressive?"

"Phil will do it all right; I will be answerable for that," returned Peter. "He stops at my house overnight whenever he comes to Eastham. I know the old man thoroughly and I have a great admiration for his geniality and honesty, so he is always welcome."

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"Of course, Peter," suggested Squire Knowles, "it would never do to have his errand talked about outside this meeting; the rumor might reach the British."

"I quite agree with your view, squire, and I am sure that if we keep the matter secret, Phil will come out of the venture safely. If you leave the affair in my hands for the present, I can talk to the old man privately tonight and tell him how we are situated?"

"We have the utmost confidence in your ability to deal with the problem, Master Walker, and I propose that you be empowered to act as a committee of one with a request that you report progress at the earliest possible moment."

The Rev. Mr. Shaw was loudly applauded as he concluded this warm tribute to his critic's diplomatic talent.

The minister's motion was carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER VII.

Phil the Fifer.

The evening passed pleasantly at Master Peter Walker's. Mistress Walker was glad to have the opportunity to get a fresh stock of needles and thread, and other little things which the pedler kept for sale. Phil was an old acquaintance. For many years he had been a welcome guest at the Walker homestead. In him Peter found a congenial spirit, and the neighbors were sure to come in to enjoy the old man's droll stories and listen to the stirring music of his fife. Phil was always ready to do his best and his popularity was unbounded with the young folks who had no sympathy with the puritanical idea that dancing was the invention of Satan.

The general public knew very little of Phil's history. Only to Peter Walker had he confided the fact that, when a mere youth, he had come to this country from Ireland. He had been a "bound-man" in Pennsylvania years before the Revolution, but when the Continental army took the field, Phil Murphy had joined the patriot ranks and served through the war with credit. Then he became a wanderer in search of adventure, and, as he told Peter: "Bedad, I found plinty of it!" About the beginning of the century, he came to Boston, his only possessions being his beloved fife and a cheerful mind. He was getting old and unfitted for hard work, so he took to the road as a pedler and eventually found his way to Cape Cod where his little wares were in demand and where he established a route.

The people liked his pleasant ways and he was always welcome to their firesides, having no permanent home of his own.

Small of stature, with bright blue eyes and a dulcet brogue, Phil the Fifer, as he was commonly called, was still an active man notwithstanding his seventy years.

Late that night, long after the family had retired, Phil and Peter were engaged in discussing the feasibility of the mission to the "Spencer."

As Peter had surmised, Phil was more than anxious to be of assistance to his good friends. There might be some difficulty in getting an interview with the prisoners, but he felt sure there would be no objection to his visiting the warship.

"It's just like this, Masther Walker: the boys aboard the ship think old Phil is a kind of an omadhaun, as we call a simpleton in the old counthry. Captain Raggett has a fine crew of dacint min, an' many the shillin' they threw at the old pedler for his little goods. The officers is all gentlemine, an' there's only wan man aboard who behaves like an upstart of a fellow. He's a master's mate called Dunton. He thried some of his nasty ways on me, but I kep' my timper, thank God!"

"Perhaps he may interfere with you again, Phil?"

"Well, Masther Walker, if he does it won't upset me. You see, if I am to get this job done for you, it won't do for me to lose my timper whatever cause I get, will it?"

"No, Phil, it won't. I know we can trust you, old friend, and I am proud that I told the meeting so. Not that any person doubted you, but you know these are troubled times, Phil, and the enemy is upon us; so most of us don't know which way to turn for help."

"I know that well, sir, an' it would ill become me to refuse to do a small favor for the frinds who have always been good to old Phil, even if my heart an' soul wasn't with the cause."

"You are well acquainted in Provincetown?"

"Oh, fairly well, Masther Walker. Old Phil knows almost everybody on the Cape. There isn't much money in Provincetown these times, but the good housekeepers have always a few pence for the needles an' thread. I'll borry a skiff from me frind John Whorf. He is fine man."

"Yes, Phil; Master Whorf is one of the Committee of Safety there. Remember me to him; he called at my shop about a month ago. He was on his way to Yarmouth and his horse wanted shoes. He told me all about the desperate state of affairs in his town."

"There's one thing I should like to mention, Masther Walker. The men of Raggett's ship are the very devils to drink when they can get the stuff. Now that their shore leave has been stopped for some time past, they will have a ragin' thirst an' nothing to satisfy it. An', by the same token, they won't be in any good spirits to talk much about their doin's. You know there's nothing to loosen a man's tongue like a drop o' the crather!"

"It makes a fool of the best of us, Phil. However, I see what you mean and I agree with you that a little lubricant is essential. There isn't very much of anything in the town at present but Uriah Nickerson has a demijohn laid by for cases of sickness and I can get a quart to help you out."

Phil smiled. "A quart isn't much among three hundred men, Masther Walker, but it will do first rate. There's one chap aboard that's a great friend o' mine. He's the boatswain an' he loves his gill, an' when he's taken a drop or two he's extra friendly. He's sure to know what's up an' I'll thrash him with a taste o' Uriah's medicine."

"All right, Phil, I'll have it for you in the morning. By the way, I'll send the horse with you as far as Truro. It will be safer for you to walk after you get there."

"That's so, Masther Walker. 'Tis like putting a beggar on horseback to see old Phil the Fifer riding. I'm used to walking in my business an' the journey won't bother me."

"We should like to hear from you as soon as possible, Phil."

"Thin I should start early. I could stable the horse at Truro, an' as I expect to be aboard the frigate tomorrow even-

in', I may be here the same night, or, at any rate, airly the next mornin'."

"That will be quick work, Phil, considering the difficulty of your task and your age?"

"Surely I'm not as young an' active as I ought be, Masther Walker, but this is work that must be done at once an' whin it's over, you'll admit that old Phil is no snail whin his frinds want him to hurry."

Peter impulsively put out his hand and grasped that of the old man.

"By the Lord!" he exclaimed, "I wish there were more hearts of gold like yours, Phil the Fifer! I have often wondered how a man of your intelligence could be content with the humble occupation of a pedler. You must have come of good stock, Phil?"

"No betther in the old County Kerry, Masther Walker, even if I do say it meself, that shoul'dn't. But that's not here or there now. Old Phil has made his bed an' he must lie on it; but there was a time whin there wasn't a smarter gorsoon in the Pinnsylvania Rifles than Phil Murphy! That winter at Valley Forge thried the best of us, but nobody could say that Phil was a grumbler."

"I'm sure of that, old friend."

"I'm thinkin', Masther Walker, that if I see aither of our frinds on the frigate, it won't do for me to show the British that I know thim."

"Why, Phil, they will be sure to speak to you if they get a chance?"

"I know that, but I must thry an' let the inimy believe that I never saw Captain Knowles or Captain Mayo before. 'Twill be hard for me to do so, especially if the captains get ahead of any signal I may make to thim, but I may be able to manage it."

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"That's so. Hoppy is nimble-witted and it won't take much to make him understand your object in avoiding them. Use your own judgment, Phil."

The arrangements for the journey to Provincetown having been perfected, conversation turned to the topics of the day. It was a period in which newspapers were scarce and few of them reached the remote villages of Cape Cod. News of the outside world was brought by traders and travelers who had occasion to visit Boston, and they sometimes thoughtfully purchased a copy of the Boston "Centinel" for their friends at home. This paper was eagerly read and passed from family to family, but, of course, the details of public events on the Cape were meagre, and many important happenings were never chronicled in the press. Men like Phil the Fifer, whose business took them into every household in the district, knew everything that was going on and they were always willing to spread the news wherever they went.

Phil told his host many interesting stories of the march of events in the upper Cape towns. The attacks of the British war-ships on Falmouth were described and the narrator was loud in his praises of the gallantry displayed by the defenders under the command of Captain Weston Jenkins of the local militia. With martial ardor, the old man told the tale of how the commander of the British brig "Nimrod" demanded the surrender of the pieces of artillery which annoyed his vessel, and how Captain Jenkins tauntingly replied: "Come and get them!" How the sick and non-combatants were removed to places of safety when the bombardment commenced, while the militia from the neighboring towns rushed to reinforce the resolute patriots of Falmouth. Then he told of the conditions at Hyannis, Yarmouth and other places and kept Master Peter Walker awake until after midnight.

We leave old Phil on his way to Provincetown while we return to our friends on the "Spencer."

CHAPTER VIII.

Raggett's Terms.

Under the guidance of Lieutenant Fotheringay the prisoners were taken through the frigate. They expressed their admiration in unstinted language. Fotheringay told them that Raggett was a strict disciplinarian who insisted that his crew should always be in first class condition for work. He was unforgiving when any of his men wilfully neglected duty; but when work was over and playtime arrived, he never interfered with the manner in which the seamen enjoyed themselves. He had closed his eyes to their frolics in Provincetown, where they sometimes made merry with great vigor, and now that shore leave was suspended he demanded implicit obedience to his order requiring special permission from himself for any of his crew to visit the town.

To the prisoners all this emphasized the change of front on the British side. Raggett evidently meant what he said when he told them he was going to obey orders. Already the "Nymph" and the "Bulwark", of the squadron blockading Cape Cod bay, were watching the coast between Barnstable and Boston. The "Spencer" with her tenders would have charge of the towns on the lower Cape, Dennis, Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro and Provincetown. So much they gathered from the lieutenant's conversation, but beyond this they got no inkling of the enemy's plans.

A summons from the captain brought them once more into the presence of that doughty warrior. His manner to his captives was very agreeable, indeed, one might say cordial. He told them many anecdotes of the great Nelson, whom he spoke of with enthusiasm. He gave a sailor's description of the battle of Trafalgar where the admiral died a hero's death, and he held the

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close attention of his hearers as he pictured the maneuvers of the opposing fleets on that memorable day.

Though much interested in the captain's yarns, Hoppy and Win could not help feeling anxious about his delay in broaching the subject of their ransom, but, of course, they could not very well hurry him to the point. They had an idea that Raggett was purposely avoiding the issue, and they knew they could best serve their own cause by patiently waiting until he thought the time was ripe for a declaration of his views on the matter.

At length that time arrived. Captain Raggett produced a chart of Cape Cod bay and laid it on the table.

"Now, men," he said, "I daresay you want to learn my terms? You will know very soon and I have great hopes that we can come to an agreement. In my opinion, you will get out of your predicament without much trouble, but that will depend altogether on yourselves. However, before we discuss the question of ransom I should like to ask you a few questions about this chart. You may answer or not, just as you please."

The prisoners were somewhat surprised at this move. Then Captain Knowles replied:

"I don't know that there is any great harm in answering any questions about the chart, Captain Raggett. I suppose there's nothing secret about it. Every shipmaster can get a chart of Cape Cod bay easily enough."

"That's so," said Raggett, "and I'm glad you take such a sensible view of it. However, this chart is not clear in some particulars and I would like to have your opinion. So far as the deepwater section of the bay is concerned there is no difficulty in following it, but, as you very well know, almost every year there is a variation in the depth of water in the neighborhood of the bars and in the channels close inshore. Therefore, a chart five years old may require correction for those places."

"Why, yes, Captain Raggett," cried Hoppy, "sometimes after a November gale whole chunks of the mainland disappear and what were cornfields become tidewater flats! If you're relying on a chart five years old you'll have to go easy inshore."

"That is my point exactly. Now, let's take the shore waters of your own town of Eastham. The flats are dry at low water for nearly a mile to seaward. Have there been any great changes in that locality in recent years?"

"Well, Captain Raggett," replied Hoppy, "there certainly have been changes. They dig clams now in some places where they harvested salt hay five years ago. Don't know that there's much difference on the outer edge of the flats, but there's no knowing, and wary skippers don't venture very far inshore. A fifty-ton lumber schooner got badly strained there three years ago."

"Then it would not be safe for a large vessel?"

Hoppy laughed. "Excuse me for laughing, Captain Raggett, but if you are thinking of sailing the "Spencer" in those waters, you run a fine chance of losing your ship!"

"How near could the "Spencer" approach?" asked Raggett.

"Not within a mile of the outer bar," answered Hoppy promptly.

Raggett's disappointment was apparent. "But the chart gives from two to ten fathoms?"

"Well, Captain Raggett, that may be, and I don't deny that it is so in spots, but there's a lot of shoal places, though they may be known only to the local pilots. It's no place for a big ship like yours; though, of course, you are the best judge of that. However, you can easily settle the matter to your own satisfaction by surveying the place."

"I may have to do that," said Raggett as he gave Hoppy a significant look.

"Now," continued Raggett, "there's Orleans lying to the

west of Eastham, and Brewster still further west. Do the same conditions exist in the flats and sandbars off those townships?"

"Yes, captain, those places are just as dangerous for large craft."

"Thank you. The information which I have received from others practically coincides with what you have said, though you seem to exaggerate the dangers of the localities. However, I shall have to verify the soundings, and I think I have the proper man for the work." Again he gave Hoppy a meaning look.

Hoppy knew full well what Raggett meant. He was, then, expected to act as pilot for the British and help them to destroy the lives and property of his kinsmen and neighbors! It required all his selfpossession to keep his outraged feelings in check, but he realized that it would be worse than useless to let Raggett suspect what he thought of the proposition, so he pretended ignorance of the British commander's purpose.

"It shouldn't be hard for you to find a good man for the work in your ship's company, Captain Raggett. Your tenders have been cruising in these waters for quite a long time and I suppose they know their way about."

Raggett smiled. "I'm afraid," he said, "that my men have become better acquainted with the hospitalities of Provincetown than with the sandbars and shoals of the bay. As you are doubtless aware, the operations on this station have been more like a picnic than warfare up to the present. I think I told you that such is the opinion of some very important personages in London, and, looking at the matter calmly, I am inclined to agree with their views. To be perfectly frank with you, men, I am going to state the terms of your ransom. You will not find them harsh. For the sum of three hundred dollars I agree to let you have your whaleboat. That's a good bargain for you, isn't it?"

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"Three hundred dollars!" exclaimed Captain Knowles. "Why, Captain Raggett, where are we to get all that money? We haven't three hundred cents in our possession!"

"That's more than the boat and cargo are worth," put in Hoppy.

"I'm afraid that's the best I can do for you," replied Raggett. "It is not much money, considered as prize-money to be distributed among a large number of men."

"But how are we to raise the money, captain? We have no means of communicating with the shore, and even if we had, we should hesitate about asking our hard-pressed friends in Eastham to pay it. Money is pretty scarce nowadays." Captain Knowles looked despairingly at his fellow-prisoner as he said this.

"You're right, Win," assented Hoppy; "there are few in Eastham now who have three hundred dollars to spare. There has been no steady business doing since this war commenced and it's been hard work to collect taxes, even."

"Have you no friends in Boston?" asked Raggett.

"Why, yes, we have some good friends in Boston, I'm glad to say," responded Win; "but what's the good of that in our present position? We can't get close enough to ask them, even if we were sure to get the money."

"Oh, that's easily managed. If I arrange for your journey to Boston, Captain Knowles, will you undertake to raise the money from your friends there and return to this ship with it on a prearranged date?"

This was presenting a new view of the situation. Neither of the prisoners was prepared for it, and some moments elapsed before a reply was given. Then a sudden thought flashed across Hoppy's mind.

"I think you had better go, Win," he said. "If Captain Raggett had made the offer to me, I might have accepted it."

You can get the money from old Abner Snow who keeps the tavern on the waterfront. He knows us well enough to trust us and he's a Cape Codder himself. I don't think you will forget the last time we saw Abner's place. 'Twas there we met that civil fellow who told us the coast was clear for the run home! Must have been a friend of yours, Captain Raggett, by the pleasant way he spoke of you!"

"I'm very glad to know I have even one friend in Boston," said Raggett smilingly. "Lieutenant Fotheringay told me something about the incident."

"Why not go yourself, Hoppy?" asked Win.

"If you will permit me," interposed Raggett, "I may say that I think you stand a better chance of being successful, Captain Knowles. You are a born diplomat" —flatteringly— "and I also understand that you have relatives in Boston who are in prosperous circumstances, so that if the worthy Snow refuses to aid you, there is still a chance for you to borrow the money from your friends. I also confess I enjoy Captain Mayo's ready wit, and his presence aboard will enliven us during your absence."

This confirmed Hoppy's suspicion that Raggett had an ulterior motive in his proposition. They could certainly raise the three hundred dollars in Boston, but he could get it just as easily as Win. Why, then, was Raggett so anxious to keep him and let Win go? He remembered Raggett's meaning looks during the study of the chart, and his remark about having the "proper man" in mind for pilot. Hoppy Mayo's alert mind was working hard now. In the matching of wits with his fellows, Hoppy had rarely come off second best, but this case was different. To be pressed into the service of his country's enemies and to aid them in a campaign of destruction against all he held dear was a position from which his soul revolted. Alone in the hands of determined foes, he would be powerless to resist their

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demands. Posterity would class him with Benedict Arnold and the disgrace would lie on his family forever. Dartmoor, or even death, were preferable to this.

"What do you say, Hoppy?" asked Win anxiously. He felt uneasy at his companion's unusual silence.

Captain Mayo looked at the British commander, but the latter met the Cape Codder's eye unflinchingly. Turning to Win, Hoppy said:

"Yes, Win, I think Captain Raggett's plan is the best. I shall be all right until your return."

"Then the matter is settled," said Raggett. "Captain Knowles, you will kindly stand ready to start for Boston tomorrow morning."

CHAPTER IX.

The Prisoners Talk It Over.

Before the prisoners retired to their quarters that night they discussed the situation earnestly. Hoppy had no doubt whatever that Raggett intended to use him as the "proper man" for the work of piloting the British tenders and barges in the shallow waters of the bay. He told his companion in misfortune that there was no use in outwardly resisting the plans of the British commander.

"It's just like this, Win: Raggett knows that you will have no difficulty in getting that three hundred dollars in Boston and that you cannot put forward any excuses to the contrary. I don't think he would die of a broken heart if you never turned up with the money. What's such a small amount divided among his crew?"

"It certainly doesn't look very large, Hoppy, but when he keeps adding to it all the time the total will amount to something. He has started on his new policy, and 'tis hard to tell where it will all end. You know what we heard about his intention to demand tribute from the towns?"

"Supposing the towns refuse to pay tribute, what then?"

"Well, Hoppy, I think that's rather a foolish question. Why, man, what can the unfortunate towns do but pay? You don't mean to tell me that they can defy the whole British squadron, do you?"

"Why not?" demanded Hoppy fiercely. "Can't you see how the thing stands? Raggett won't take his ship into the shallow waters. He has no proper knowledge of the conditions just outside the bars, and if you were taking any notice you might have heard me purposely exaggerate the danger of trusting to his charts. He won't take any chances of getting

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stranded, I can tell you, and he will keep at a safe distance. Then, if he intends to attack the villages he must depend on his barges to land his forces."

"And what's to prevent him from doing that?"

"His common sense, man. Supposing he decides to land a strong force, and it must be pretty strong if our people put up any sort of a fight, he must do so at high water. Well, the flats extend for more than a mile to seaward and the landing party must make pretty good use of the time to be able to get away safely before the ebb catches the boats on the flats. Raggett has only about three hundred men on the "Spencer," and the "Nymph" and the "Bulwark" are not likely to leave their own stations to assist him, unless in case of great need. His landing party might number two hundred fighting men, but I doubt it. That would leave his ship pretty shorthanded in case of disaster to the barges. And why shouldn't they meet disaster? Are the men of Cape Cod going to imitate old Samoset and say once again 'Welcome, Englishmen!?' I don't believe it!"

"But you must remember, Hoppy, that the people are very poorly equipped for a fight against the well-armed enemy?"

"I know that; but, as I pointed out just now, the flats will more than compensate for the difference in that way. There is too much risk about landing a large force and Raggett will not take it. If Eastham, Orleans and Brewster join forces to repel the invaders they will surely beat them."

"I wish I could look at it in your way, Hoppy, but I can't. The "Spencer" could get close enough to destroy the salt works, anyway."

"The salt works be damned! Good God, man! this is war, and something has to go. Her artillery can't do very much damage to the town which, after all, is only a sparsely settled place. She will be too far off shore for the range, though, of course, she's bound to do some injury to property. I tell you,

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Win, that Raggett will make a big show but he will not weaken his ship by detailing two-thirds of his crew for shore work. When he decides on doing it he will take care to have the other ships with him."

Captain Knowles was a man of tried courage. He would not be found wanting when the test came, but his best judgment would not allow him to take Hoppy's view of the ease. There was great truth in much of Hoppy's summing up, but to Win it appeared incredible that the outcome of any clash of arms could be otherwise than disastrous to the Americans.

"It's all very well to say the salt works be damned, Hoppy, but I can tell you the owners of the works won't let their property be destroyed if they can save it by paying a reasonable sum for immunity. Then, it's not quite certain that Brewster and Orleans would be able to do much for Eastham."

"Brewster has an artillery company, though it's not very well organized. Still, it has two pieces and they could be made useful if properly handled. There's one thing I'm very sure of; Orleans will put up a good fight if the British attack that town."

"Yes, I heard Orleans means to fight. I fear it will be a useless sacrifice of life."

"Well, Win, we had better wait a little longer and postpone the argument until we have more information on the subject. What's your idea about Raggett's proposal? Do you think he really desires to see you back with the money?"

"Certainly I do."

"Well, I don't. My opinion is that he wants to get rid of one of us. One is enough for his purpose and I have told you what that purpose is; so, Win, I don't expect to see you again while I'm on this ship."

"He can't prevent me from returning with the money."

"Oh, yes, he can. You can't reach the "Spencer" without his permission, and while he thinks he can use me he won't grant that permission."

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"Then you are going to act as his pilot?"

"That's a hard way to put it, Win. It may be that he wants to correct his charts and in that case I shall be obliged to go with his surveying party. It won't help him very much, I can promise you. I have an idea of what's going to happen, but I may be mistaken. I shall have to trust to my wits in the matter; but there's one thing I can tell you right here, and I want you to bear it in mind: Hoppy Mayo will never turn traitor to his country, though for some time to come he must be trusted to play the game in his own way."

"All right, Hoppy, I'll tell them what you said. There's nobody in Eastham will believe you to be a traitor."

Win reached his hand and his comrade grasped it warmly.

Next morning Captain Knowles was put on board the schooner. As the little craft made sail and started on her voyage, Hoppy waved farewell to his friend, more than ever convinced that he should not see him again on the "Spencer."

Captain Raggett sent word to Hoppy that the latter could have the freedom of the ship provided he promised not to attempt to escape. He was also informed that orders had been given to supply him with clothing or anything else he required. Hoppy readily gave the promise and thanked the commander for his thoughtfulness.

As the day went on, Hoppy Mayo noticed that everybody on board the frigate seemed to be very busy. There was no interference with his leisure and from his seat by one of the guns he was an interested observer of the movements of the nimble sailors as they jumped from place to place in obedience to the orders of the officers. So far as he could see, there was no occasion for all the bustle, but at that time he was not aware that this incessant training was Raggett's way of keeping his men in condition for service at a moment's notice.

Hoppy's usually buoyant spirits were depressed by the events

of the day before and by the departure of his comrade. During the dinner hour he listlessly followed the movements of a small skiff that was zigzagging its way from the shore, its solitary occupant clumsily handling the oars. When the skiff came within hailing distance of the frigate the oarsman paused as if irresolute about venturing nearer the warship. Soon the sound of music came over the waters and Hoppy started to his feet as he recognized the familiar notes of Phil the Fifer. The officer of the deck, who had been intently watching the skiff, laughed heartily, and if he had any anxiety as to the boatman's intentions it was entirely dispelled. Hoppy heard him remark to a brother officer:

"That's the old pedler who amuses the crew with his droll sayings and his fife. He's a favorite with the captain, but I'm not sure that we can allow him on board now."

In answer to his hail the skiff came alongside. Phil pulled off his old hat and cheerfully accosted the officer:

"Bedad, Lieutenant Jameson, it's a cure for sore eyes to see your honor agin! An' what is all this throuble about that I can't enthertain me old customers any more with a tune on the old fife?"

"We should be very glad to see you on deck, Phil, but the captain's orders are strict about admitting strangers aboard."

"Sthrangers! Well, lieutenant, but that bates the divil. When was old Phil a sthranger among the fine min o' this ship, I'd like to know?"

"Sorry, Phil, but it can't be helped this time."

Hoppy was puzzled at all this and he came to the side to look on. Phil caught sight of him and giving him a significant wink, said:

"Bedad, lieutenant, it seems to me that thim ordhers is aisily broken! That gintleman up there is a sthranger to me, anyway! I don't remimber ever havin' seen him before, an' his uniform ain't that of the king of England!"

The officer smiled. "Oh, Phil, that's an American visitor who is spending a few days on board."

"The Americans is a frindly people, sure enough, lieutenant, an' I have no doubt they injoy your company, only it's a mighty quare time to be showin' off how much they like you! You'll excuse me, sir," addressing Hoppy, "but might I ax what part o' the counthry you came from? Maybe you'd be wantin' some o' my little wares for your thrip?"

By this time Hoppy could plainly see that old Phil was playing a deep game and that part of it was his desire to avoid an open acknowledgment of acquaintance with him; therefore, he answered:

"I'm from Connecticut, my good man. Captain Raggett will supply me with everything needful, so I don't think I require anything from you."

This seemed to amuse Lieutenant Jameson. "Captain Mayo," he said, "perhaps the old pedler has some little articles which you may require? If so, there can be no harm in your going over the side to inspect his stock. The orders are not to let strangers aboard, but I don't see anything objectionable in your examining his stock."

Phil's heart beat fast now. He never expected such a chance as this! In a moment Hoppy was in the skiff and while he was pretending to examine the wares, Phil managed to convey to him the purpose of his visit. Hoppy was astonished and grateful for the tidings. As the pair made a great show about bargaining for needles and such things, he whispered how the case stood and asked Phil to tell his friends ashore not to lose faith in him even if some things appeared strange to them.

It was all over in a few minutes. As Hoppy reached the deck with a few small articles, Phil the Fifer was profusely thanking Lieutenant Jameson for his kindness.

"May God bless your honor, but it's you that knows how to

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help a poor man! Thim Conneecticut Yankees is hard to plaze, though. Now, I won't bother your honor any longer as I can't do any business with me good frinds aboard this time. Tell thim I'll come agin. Goodby, lieutenant, and good luek!"

Then the pedler turned the prow of his skiff shoreward, highly elated that he had succeeded in his mission.

CHAPTER X.

A Consultation.

"What do you think of it, Fotheringay?" asked Captain Raggett.

"I think, sir, that Captain Mayo was right in saying the place is dangerous for the frigate. We certainly cannot afford to run any risks at present."

Captain Raggett had great respect for the opinion of the young lieutenant and had invited him to the cabin for a consultation on the situation.

"This Mayo seems a shrewd fellow, Fotheringay, and I fancy he already suspects what I want him for."

"Yes, sir, he is shrewd, and I have no doubt whatever that he has guessed your purpose. But I can assure you that he is a man highly respected by his neighbors for his integrity and courage and you may have great difficulty in bending him to your will."

"You know the consequences of refusal on his part? Much as I dislike to do it, I shall have to transfer him to another ship where he will be obliged to take his chances in the fore-castle and whatever rating on the ship's books his commander decides on. You are aware that this is frequently done with American prisoners and when they show a spirit of disobedience to their fate they are triced up and flogged. The "Grampus" has a rapscallion crew of jailbirds and pressed men, so Barclay is having daily use for the lash."

"Yes, sir, we are lucky in having a picked crew on the "Spencer."

"That's so. Mostly all the best men are engaged in the fleets off the French coast; but I had some influence with the admiral and used it to get a good crew for my ship. Some of

them had served under me before. They are all right until they get foul of a cask of rum."

I'm afraid, sir, if Captain Mayo gets into Barelay's hands there will be hard times for a man of his sturdy Americanism."

"Aye, Mayo is of the stiff-necked breed that inhabits this region. And yet, he is of the purest English blood. I sometimes think these people must have just cause for their resentment against the mother country, but it wouldn't do for me to say so openly. I admire the man's pluck, and it would please me to do him a favor under happier circumstances; but, my dear Fotheringay, all such kindly thoughts have no place in our present plans. I have got my orders to proceed vigorously against these people and I'm going to do it."

"And we all know that Captain Raggett has never shirked • his duty no matter how distasteful to his personal feelings that duty might be. But it must be particularly obnoxious in the present case, when he has to fight men of his own race. In no part of this continent, Captain Raggett, are the inhabitants of such pure English stock as they are on Cape Cod."

"So I hear, Fotheringay. I am not very well posted in their history, myself; but, of course, I know that Provincetown was the first harbor made by the "Mayflower" and that the population of Cape Cod is largely descended from the first settlers."

"The full story of the early settlers has yet to be written, sir. There has been little time for such work during the nearly two centuries that have elapsed since the "Mayflower's" voyage. Europe has been in a state of almost constant warfare, and the American colonies of Britain were engaged in the effort to establish a settled government and to protect themselves from the savage aborigines. The mother country was neglectful of her exiled children, her attention being entirely directed to the protection of her own shores from the assaults of her foes in Europe. Consequently, much ignorance of conditions in America

prevailed, and it was not until the colonists revolted and won their independence that Britain realized how much she had lost."

"Why, Fotheringay, you talk like a statesman! We never studied such subjects when I was your age. We were sent to sea when we reached fourteen and our learning was pretty limited. After that we had to do the best we could. I regret to say that I neglected my opportunities and you see the result—I have to depend on youngsters like you for information on matters with which every officer should be familiar!"

"If you will permit me to say so, Captain Raggett, I don't think this lack of historical knowledge on your part has caused England to feel less pride in the career of the gallant seaman who has kept her flag flying through many a hard-fought fight."

"Thank you, Fotheringay; thank you, my lad. Old Dick Raggett has done his best for his king and country according to the measure of his ability, even though some of the young bloods at the Admiralty don't seem to think he's fit for this blockading service!"

"Now," he continued, "I feel somewhat interested in these people of Cape Cod, and you may help me to understand them better. I notice your friends, Captains Knowles and Mayo, speak excellent English for men in their station of life?"

"That is a characteristic of the people, Captain Raggett. The first settlers were men of unusual intelligence and, when you consider the age in which they lived, of some education. They were keen students of the Bible; in fact, it was their only book and their language was modeled on its style. Then, their ministers were men of great learning and they exercised much influence in secular as well as in religious affairs. Their word was law with their flocks and it is not improbable that the people paid them the compliment of imitation in their habit of conversing in good English."

"Why did these first settlers leave England?"

"The primary reason was that their religious belief was antagonistic to the established church. They did not believe in the establishment, and they formed a society for the advancement of their own ideas. For this they were persecuted and fled to Holland where, after a residence of some years, they decided to cross the ocean in search of a new home."

"Oh, they were for freedom of conscience, eh? Their descendants don't follow them in that respect, Fotheringay. Why, in this very town of Provincetown there is at present open war between the Congregationalists and the Methodists! The Methodists are newcomers, and the adherents of the old order resent their presence. Are they not practising here the tactics against which their forefathers rebelled in England?"

The humor of the situation appealed to the lieutenant and he laughingly answered:

"That, indeed, seems to be the case, sir. It must certainly be admitted that the era of perfect religious toleration has not yet arrived. However, we English are not in a position to throw stones at the Cape Codders. Our own laws dealing with his majesty's Catholic subjects are no credit to our enlightenment."

"I quite agree with you, Fotheringay, and I hope we may live to see the day when every man can freely worship God as his conscience dictates. Creeds should matter little when a common danger threatens a people. I must say, however, that I am surprised to learn of intolerance in this young land of America. In old Europe we are the slaves of tradition and suspicion, and reform is slow, but the same thing does not apply to the New World where there's a chance for all to start on the same level."

After some further conversation of this kind, they resumed the discussion of the prospective operations.

"I shall have to ask tribute from all the towns, and I don't mean to be hard on them; but they must pay, if only as evidence

to convince London that we are doing something. I know they are in a bad state financially but that's their lookout."

"In case they refuse, Captain Raggett, what are you going to do?"

Captain Raggett's expression hardened. "They dare not refuse, Fotheringay. The salt works along the shore can easily be destroyed by our guns, and as salt-making is the principal industry the people will think a long time before they invite its destruction. We can throw shots into the villages, but I shall not resort to such extreme measures until I am forced to do so."

"Brewster has an artillery company, I understand, sir, and it may do some damage to a landing party?"

"There will be no landing party, Fotheringay, unless we get reinforcements. I have been considering that point and I have come to the conclusion that these accursed flats are the greatest ally of the Cape Codders. Now, I have made up my mind to send the schooner on a surveying cruise in the bay and I purpose to have your friend Mayo act as pilot. Dunton will be the officer in charge of the schooner."

"I foresee trouble, Captain Raggett. Dunton heartily hates all Americans and there is sure to be a clash. You know Dunton's surly disposition?"

"Yes; but he's a good man in his place. He's sour because so many younger men have got ahead of him in the service. I don't admire his surliness, but he's just the man I want for this surveying business. The fact that he has got a Yankee pilot will make him suspicious, and with such a shrewd antagonist as Mayo he will require to be on the alert. I look for good results from the expedition."

"It will take some time to survey so much shore line."

"Oh, there's no hurry about it. However, it should not take over a week if the weather continues fine. I intend to take the frigate for a practice cruise off Boston, but with a crew of

about twenty Dunton should be able to protect himself during my absence."

"That should be an ample force, sir. By the way, have you informed Captain Mayo of your purpose?"

"No, Fotheringay; but, as I said, I fancy he knows it. However, you will be good enough to convey it to him officially."

"Then you don't expect to see Captain Knowles again, sir?"

"Unless he tries to run another cargo to Eastham; then I may have the pleasure, Fotheringay. For the present, we will not bother ourselves about his return."

"Very well, sir; I shall now deliver your orders to Captain Mayo."

CHAPTER XI.

An Argument.

The trusty pedler made no unnecessary delay on his return journey from Provincetown. The sandy road somewhat retarded his progress, but Master Walker's horse was a good one and needed little urging. There were, of course, some necessary explanations to be made to the Provincetown committee, and the worthy citizens who had charge of affairs in that place were much disturbed when they got confirmation of the rumor that the British were fully determined to assume the offensive in earnest. So far as Provincetown was directly concerned, Raggett's change of front would not materially add to the troubles of the inhabitants, who were already completely at the enemy's mercy. But for their neighbors and friends in the other towns of the lower Cape, Master Jonathan Cook and his colleagues were deeply concerned.

"You will tell them at Eastham, Phil," said the chairman, "that we regret our inability to be of any assistance to them. Our own poor town is in a sad plight and I fear me if this war continues much longer we shall have a repetition of the exodus of Revolutionary times."

"An' sure I will, Master Cook, an' sorry I am to see this fine town in such a bad state. 'Twas mighty aisy for a poor man to make a dacint livin' here a few years ago when the fishin' was bringin' loads o' money to the people. But now, God help us! the good days are gone an' nobody has any money more than they want for themselves."

"That's so, Phil. However, we hear that our privateers are doing great damage to the enemy's commerce, and when John Bull finds his trade in danger he will want the war stopped."

With many expressions of sympathy, they bade the pedler Godspeed.

When Peter Walker heard Phil's story he lost no time in informing the Committee of Safety. It was too late that evening to call a public meeting, but there was a crowded attendance at Crosby's tavern and Phil the Fifer was eagerly questioned regarding his interview with Hoppy.

"I reckon Hoppy felt rather miserable, Phil? How did he like the idea of acting as pilot?" asked Obed Sparrow.

"To tell you the truth, Master Sparrow," replied Phil, "Captain Mayo didn't like the position; but as to bein' miserable, well, I don't think it's his nature to feel so at any time."

"It's a wonder that British officer did not suspect something."

"Oh, Lieutenant Jameson is a rale gintleman, an' he knows, besides, that old Phil wouldn't desave him!"

The old man's innocent expression as he said this caused general laughter.

"If he should hear the result of your visit, Phil, he won't be so confiding the next time," said Squire Knowles.

"Faith, an' I'm sure he won't, squire. But I'm thinkin' it will be a long time before the lieutenant will see me agin. This war will soon be over, plaze God, an' the foreigners will sail away an' lave the people o' Cape Cod in paice wance more."

"What makes you think so, Phil?"

"Well, squire, I heard some talk in Yarmouth about the work o' the American privateers among the British ships, an' Master Cook o' Provincetown told me the same story. 'Tis said that John Bull is grumbling about the loss he's sufferin' an' that the big merchants o' London won't stand it much longer. Our frind John is like the rest of us, he hates to get touched in the pocket."

"So Hoppy is going as pilot," said Captain Jared Higgins; "that's about the last thing I'd expect from Hoppy Mayo!"

"As I told you," replied Phil to this, "Captain Mayo said

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that some people might think it quare that he agreed to it; but you needn't fear about him, Captain Higgins; he'll never turn thraitor. Whatever he has in his mind to do I can't tell you, but from the little he told me I can see that his mind is workin' hard at some plan to get the betther o' the inimy. All I know is that he wanted you to have faith in him, an' anywan who knows Captain Mayo will find that enough."

"That's right, Phil; I firmly believe Hoppy will outwit them!" cried Peter Walker.

"This war will beggar the people of Cape Cod, anyway," growled Captain Jared. "If the President took Governor Strong's advice there would be no war."

This was Captain Jared's great point in his antagonism to the war policy of the national government. His prolonged idleness was having a bad effect on his temper and the gallant old seaman was always ready and willing to argue at any length in support of his views. Not many cared to enter the lists with the captain; but Peter Walker, a strong supporter of the administration and Jared's foremost opponent, remarked:

"The President has more sense than to listen to such people as Cale Strong, Jared, and there's lots of people on Cape Cod who don't think much of the same Cale."

"Is that so, Peter?" Captain Jared turned fiercely to where Peter sat in his accustomed place. "Everybody knows that you can't lose much by the war. What is it to you if the British destroy the salt works? You took good care to sell your share in the salt business to Ed. Clark, though I'm not saying that you did so on account of the war. Still, if a man has so little to lose as you have in that way, it don't seem right for him to find fault with those who suffer most."

Peter's goodhumor was proof against this assault. "Well, Jared," he replied, "I think I gave Ed. quite a good bargain in the matter, and he seemed to be satisfied. What I want to

show you is this: Strong received 53 votes at the last election and Dexter got 31. That was the vote of Eastham and it shows that there are thirty voters besides myself who agree with the President of the United States as against Governor Strong."

"I'm willing to bet that most of the thirty owe you money for horseshoeing!" retorted Captain Jared, "and, anyway, Peter, 'tis easy to tell who they are; they are your cronies who spend most of their time in your shop listening to your rhymes making fun of the neighbors, and enjoying it, too. The fools don't know that you'll be after themselves soon!"

Roars of laughter greeted this thrust at Peter and Obed Sparrow cried:

"That's right, Captain Jared! you are the man to down Peter."

Jared gave Obed a withering glance. "Good Lord, Obed Sparrow!" he exclaimed, "to think of your putting in your oar when you just echo every word that comes from Peter's mouth! I'll give Peter the credit of being able to twist you and your fellows about his little finger when he wants your votes; but by George, that's no reason why you should interfere in this argument."

Obed looked crestfallen at this rebuke. Peter rallied to his support.

"Why, Jared, Obed is one of the most independent men in this town, and you know it. Obed's vote isn't for sale like some others we know that followed the Strong party, and I don't mean you by that, Captain Higgins."

Obed was grateful for this testimony to his integrity. He plucked up courage to return to the fray.

"Thank you, Master Walker. I suppose Captain Jared also believes that you made the Orleans voters go against Strong! That town gave 101 for Dexter and only 21 for Strong. If all the people there who went against Cale Strong owe you money you must have a lot of names on your books!"

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"Don't talk to me about Orleans, Obed Sparrow," cried Captain Jared; "they are the most pig-headed of all the war party. Simeon Kingman is a firebrand and he is ably assisted by John Kenrick."

"If Squire Kingman and Master John Kenrick are firebrands, Captain Jared, they are backed by their townsmen in the firing. They have always been leading men in their town and they wouldn't be if they didn't prove themselves worthy."

"I'm not saying anything against their characters, Obed. They are friends of mine though I don't agree with their politics. They think they can defy the British fleet! Any fool should know that you can't beat off a heavily armed force with a few old muskets, and, so far as I know, that's about all the arms they have."

"Then you don't believe in fighting, Captain Jared?"

"Obed, you are a young man and you have proved yourself a brave man. I have no right to find fault with you for asking that question, but in my young days we were taught to believe that men whose gray beards betokened years of experience behind them had seen some of the ups and downs of life and could fairly advise us in our troubles. I am close to my seventieth year and in my time I have seen bloody deeds done afloat and ashore. Like you, at one time I thought the quick answer and the ready blow most became a man, and even yet I think there are occasions when there is no other course open to a man of honor. It was on such an occasion that I got this wound, Obed; but the Barbary pirate who inflicted it never lived to harm anybody else."

There was intense silence as Captain Jared opened his shirt front and displayed a terrible scar across his chest.

"When you ask me if I believe in fighting, Obed, I can call this to witness, though the occasion doesn't often arise when a man doubts my word. If your uncle Jethro could come to life

he might tell you of that terrible night in the Straits of Gibraltar when the pirates boarded us and five stalwart Yankees gave their lives in defence of their ship."

The crowd was deeply stirred by the old man's words and Obed Sparrow impulsively shouted:

"By the Lord, Captain Jared! I humbly ask your pardon. I never doubted your willingness to fight, but my question applied to the present trouble. I'm sorry I said anything about it now."

"That's all right, my lad," answered Captain Jared; "all I ask is that if some of us believe the unfortunate people of these villages can get out of their troubles without bloodshed and utter ruin we shall not be considered any less anxious to uphold the honor of the flag than those who advocate sterner work against the enemy. For my own part, I am willing to abide by whatever the Committee of Safety and the people decide on."

"Bravo, Captain Jared!" exclaimed Peter Walker. "That's the proper way to look at it. And now, friends, I think it's time to go home, especially as Neighbor Crosby is doing very little business these hard times!"

"Very little, indeed, Master Walker, but I'm expecting something overland soon."

"Glad to hear it, Master Crosby. Good night!"

CHAPTER XII.

On Board the Schooner.

Fotheringay, in his kindly way, conveyed the captain's orders to Hoppy and strongly advised the Cape Codder to make the best of a difficult situation.

"I feel sure, Captain Mayo, that your patriotism urges you to refuse Captain Raggett's ultimatum; but, after all, you are not asked to take arms against your compatriots. My interpretation of your orders is that your duty will be to assist Dunton in keeping the schooner clear of the shoals during the surveying cruise."

"I'm not any too well read in the law, lieutenant, but I can plainly see that my assistance to the enemy in war time looks pretty much like treason to my country. I have heard Uncle Jabez Rich tell the story of Benedict Arnold too often not to know something of a traitor's fate. All the same, lieutenant, 'tis very kind of you to try and make it easy for me."

"Captain Raggett is determined to have his way in this matter, Captain Mayo, and it pains me to think of your position should you refuse to carry out his orders. I have heard some stories of the fearful punishments suffered by recalcitrant American prisoners and I know Barelay of the "Grampus" does not mince matters when dealing with such unfortunates."

"Aye," said Hoppy, "I know the poor devils are badly treated. Dunton seems to know that we are to be shipmates; he passed me a short time ago and there was a triumphant leer on his countenance. I shouldn't call him a handsome man at the best of times, but the look he favored me with would become the devil himself!"

"Yes, Captain Mayo, Dunton has got orders to be ready for the cruise. I regret that you should be under his command, but

I trust you will see the uselessness of running foul of him."

"Oh, you can trust me for that, lieutenant. I shall make it a point to steer clear of him as much as I can. Anyway, as the schooner will have a crew of twenty it looks like a poor chance for me in case of trouble!"

"The crew will treat you all right. They are all good men and especially detailed for this business on account of their good characters. Like all man-o'-war's men they like their frolic and their grog, but Dunton is not very popular and he is sure to limit the strong waters."

"Then his popularity won't increase, Mr. Fotheringay. When do we start?"

"The frigate sails tomorrow for a practice cruise in Massachusetts bay and it is probable that the schooner will leave at the same time."

"All right, Mr. Fotheringay; you can tell Captain Raggett that I shall do my best to help Dunton in the survey. Between us we should be able to find out the dangerous places, and they are many. I wonder what Win Knowles thinks of all this!"

"Captain Knowles will be very busy getting that ransom money," replied the lieutenant smilingly.

"He'll be in a devil of a state of mind when he finds that he can't get back to the frigate! However, I gave him a broad hint that his journey would do me no good, but Win was always one of those fellows that you can't convince when he's made up his mind that his own ideas are the best."

Fotheringay reported Hoppy's decision to the commander and the latter expressed his satisfaction at the Cape Codder's acquiescence in the project. Next morning, the frigate passed out of Provincetown harbor and headed for the northwest. Soon after, the schooner's anchor was weighed and the memorable cruise began.

It was a lovely morning. Before the gentle breeze the

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schooner took her leisurely way across Cape Cod bay and in the direction of Barnstable. As he stood on her deck, Hoppy Mayo was a prey to conflicting thoughts. He little dreamed that at the finish of the adventure in which he was an unwilling participant he should occupy a niche in the temple of fame, or that his name should be handed down through the years as that of a man who had not hesitated in the face of fearful odds to match his strategy against the foes of his country and win undying renown by an act of individual daring which has rarely been equaled in our naval annals. No such thought crossed his mind; but, on the contrary, he felt already the opprobrium which would be his lot when history should record the fact that he had aided the enemies of the fatherland. True, he had not abandoned all hope; his keen mind had been at work and he had reasoned it out that there was still a chance left. This chance was a remote one, but stranger things had occurred and fortune might yet favor him.

As the schooner crept across the bay, Hoppy's gaze ranged along the low-lying shores of old Cape Cod. The long stretches of white strand glistened in the sunlight and the tiny hillocks, known as the dunes, seemed to be engaged in a brave effort to raise themselves above the tops of the sea pines and the stunted oaks of the neighboring groves. Billingsgate Point broke the sameness of the coastline and guarded the harbor of Wellfleet, the only important haven south of Provincetown, the other landing-places being small creeks and inlets. The high tide concealed the treacherous flats so much dreaded by the British commander, and the placid surface of the sea revealed no evidence of the dangerous sandbars on which many a heedless mariner had come to grief. Within the encircling arm of the Cape, almost at the point where it abruptly turns northward, the pilot could see his native village of Eastham, and the sight added to his bitterness of soul. Cape Cod towns were then, and, indeed, are at the

present day, straggling places altogether different from the old-world idea of a town. They are properly townships, each about six miles in length and, on the lower Cape, from Brewster to Provincetown, the width of each township varies with the Cape itself, being bounded on either side by the ocean and the bay, narrowing from about three miles at Orleans to a good deal less at Truro and Provincetown. There is no crowding of habitations in the villages. Land is cheap and the people believe in plenty of elbow room.

For the first time since the outbreak of hostilities, Hoppy felt inclined to coincide with the views of Jared Higgins, Winslow Knowles and other leaders of the anti-war party. It was easy enough to join in the patriotic indignation aroused by the acts of the British, but it was one thing to wax eloquent on the question at Crosby's and another to be helpless in the hands of the enemy, forced to obey the orders of a bully like Dunton and obliged to play a part, the very thought of which brought the blush of shame to his cheek. There, a few miles away, were "his young barbarians all at play." There were his neighbors, the playmates of his childhood and the companions of his youth and manhood. Peace, for the moment, hovered over the scene and in the absence of the warships there appeared nothing likely to disturb the seeming tranquility of the smiling land. But what of the morrow? The thunder of the enemy's guns would bring terror to helpless women and children and many a happy home might suffer the loss of its brave defenders. Ruined roofter and bloody corpse would testify to Britannia's might, and all because the cradle-land of his race with cruel arrogance refused to the youthful and still weak American nation the rights which every free people must maintain or perish. So absorbed was the captive in these reflections that he did not notice the approach of Dunton until the latter's voice brought him to with a start.

"Taking in the scenery, Mayo? One would think you had

never seen it before by the attention you seem to be giving it."

Hoppy took no notice of the sneering tone in which this was said. He had made up his mind to stand a lot from Dunton, but every insult would be stored in his memory and when the proper time arrived the Englishman would be amply repaid in a manner thoroughly satisfactory to the American.

"It looks kind of pretty at this distance, Mr Dunton."

"Seems to me you have a queer idea of prettiness, Mayo. A few heaps of sand and a few miserable patches of trees don't make a pretty scene, to my mind. How sensible people can be content to live on such a sandbar is more than I can understand."

"Yet, Mr. Dunton, the men who first settled here were Englishmen and their descendants are still the owners of the land."

"That may be so, Mayo, but I have heard the first English in these parts were a set of cranks who left England because they could not get along with their own people."

"Then there must be quite a lot of that crankiness left in the blood," answered Hoppy slyly. "The present inhabitants have no great welcome for their friends from the other side."

"Any Englishman who would leave his own country for this savage place must have something wrong with him. You have no aristocracy here, Mayo, and any country without an aristocracy can never rank as a great nation. What would England be without her aristocracy?"

Hoppy was surprised to find Dunton in such a conversational mood and gave him every encouragement to talk.

"What good does an aristocracy do for England, Mr. Dunton?"

"Of course you Yankees can't be expected to understand the matter, Mayo; but, for one thing, will you tell me how England could officer her army and navy unless she had an aristocracy to furnish the men for the positions?"

"I certainly can't answer that question, Mr. Dunton, knowing so very little about your ways over there, but I have heard

Uncle Jabez Rich say that a title does not make a man an aristocrat."

"Whoever this Rich is, he's a fool, Mayo. What's a title for unless it be for the purpose of placing a man in the aristocratic class?"

"Then you wouldn't consider such a man as George Washington an aristocrat?"

Dunton laughed heartily at this question. "No, Mayo, indeed I wouldn't, although I have heard that your great man was a cut above the common people. He would probably rank as a small squire with us, or as a gentleman farmer. Lafayette was an aristocrat, though only a French one."

"By George, Mr. Dunton, I see my education has been sadly neglected! All I can say is that Washington fought pretty well considering he wasn't an aristocrat!"

"He couldn't have won without Lafayette's help, and that proves that an aristocrat makes the best commanding officer. Then he had Baron Steuben, another aristocrat, to drill his men."

"You will excuse my ignorance, Mr. Dunton, but wasn't Lord Cornwallis an aristocrat and wasn't the British army crowded with aristocratic officers?"

"Yes, that's true, but the men they commanded were only a measly set of Hessian mercenaries."

"Oh, I see," said Hoppy as if he were convinced.

The schooner was now within a few miles of Nobsusset Point. Soundings were taken frequently but the results showed no immediate danger. Dunton, however, decided to cast anchor and he informed Hoppy that if the wind were favorable later he should survey to the eastward and anchor for the night off Brewster. But the wind became easterly, continuing so all day, and as evening approached, Dunton gave orders to make all snug for the night. So ended the first day of the cruise and Hoppy was thankful that his commanding officer had conducted himself fairly well so far.

CHAPTER XIII.

Anxious Hours Ashore.

When the frigate and the schooner left Provincetown Master Jonathan Cook immediately sent messengers with the news to the other towns. The unwelcome tidings were received with mixed feelings by the people of Eastham. Members of the war party argued that this move was to be expected any day, and, now that it had come, they saw no reason why it should cause any surprise or add to the already desperate condition of the inhabitants. Things couldn't be much worse and they should be ready to face the inevitable like men and go down with colors flying. In this attitude the fighting faction was sustained by the bold declaration of the Orleans people that under no circumstances would that town surrender without a fight. On the other hand, there were many men of great influence in the councils of the community who favored compromise with the enemy. The patriotism and courage of these leaders were not open to question. Their devotion to the country's cause had been tested on many occasions and they had earned the right to popular leadership by their wisdom and integrity in the administration of public affairs in times of peace. The safety of the lives and property of the inhabitants was to them the first consideration and the most pressing one. When the national government was unable to come to their assistance, they argued, what chance had the little towns of Cape Cod against the powerful enemy at their doors? If, by the payment of a sum of money, they could purchase immunity, would not such a course be better than to offer a feeble resistance and invite inevitable slaughter? They could in the course of time make up for the present loss of money, but the gallant lives sacrificed in a futile struggle could never be recalled. There were hopes that the war would soon be over. The wailing of the British merchants for their ships and cargoes

captured by the American privateers was having an effect on the British government, and the lesson of the Revolution was not yet forgotten in England. There was no dishonor in seeking the best terms they could get in their plight.

The Committee of Safety held an all-day session, open to all the voters, but there seemed no prospect of reaching an agreement between the opposing factions. It was apparent, however, that the fighting element was weakening. The stern logic of the situation was calmly put before the meeting by Squire Harding Knowles and his weighty words were listened to with the respect which all the utterances of this worthy citizen commanded from his fellow-townsmen.

"It seems to me, sirs," said the squire, "that it is, as yet, somewhat early to cast a final vote on the question. The frigate has left Provincetown and sailed northward, which course will take her from our immediate neighborhood. Though we are convinced that Captain Raggett means to harry us, it is strange that he should postpone taking action when everything appears to favor him in attacking us just at present."

"The schooner is cruising off Brewster, squire," remarked Timothy Cole, "and as Hoppy Mayo is supposed to be on board of her, it is very likely Raggett will wait until Hoppy has been forced to make known the dangerous places off the bars."

"The schooner doesn't appear to be making much headway; perhaps Hoppy has already made them acquainted with one of the dangerous places by running the craft aground," suggested Peter Walker.

Master Walker's suggestion caused a laugh. "The wind has not been favorable for her eastward voyage, Master Walker," replied Squire Knowles.

"Well, anyhow," broke in Obed Sparrow, "Raggett is evidently afraid of the bars and flats or he wouldn't take so much trouble to safeguard his ship."

"He doesn't trust his charts and I don't blame him," said

Captain Jared. "The British didn't have much use for Cape Cod bay since the Revolution, and there's many a change in the coastline since then."

A chuckle from Peter Walker caused all eyes to turn in his direction. The meeting was sadly in want of a cheerful note amid the general gloom, but the members of the Committee of Safety viewed with disfavor what they considered ill-timed merriment on the part of the town wit.

"If you will excuse me for saying so, Master Walker," said the chairman severely, "I think this is no time for jesting." Then to the meeting: "We have serious work before us, sirs, and I trust you will give us the benefit of your undivided attention in the solution of our difficulties."

"I am, indeed, very sorry, Mr. Chairman," answered Master Walker in a tone of deep respect, "but it is not because of want of sympathy with you and your colleagues on the Committee of Safety that I smiled. We cannot all view the situation from the same standpoint, and while I believe every man present has a desire to do his best for the town and people, still, I don't think we should make arrangements for a funeral until we have the corpse laid out. I decline to believe that God Almighty has entirely deserted us. We are at present bothering ourselves with a matter which may never grow to anything more serious than it now is. Who can tell how this schooner's cruise will end? I have an idea that with one of our bravest citizens aboard, this little schooner is destined to go through some stirring experiences before Hoppy Mayo is finished with her. I apologize for smiling, but I couldn't help it when I thought of the British ignorance of the bars and dependence on Hoppy Mayo for knowledge of them! Take my word for it, they will know all about them to their cost before Hoppy resigns his present job!"

"Let us hope that our good neighbor, Captain Mayo, will come out of his adventure unscathed," said Squire Knowles.

"He's in a close corner, squire, but if it were left to me to

choose a man from our town capable of fighting the enemy inch by inch in any game they like to play, I think I couldn't make a better choice than Hoppy."

Peter's words evoked loud applause from the meeting.

"Have you heard from Brewster, Mr. Chairman?" asked the Rev Mr Shaw.

"I have, sir. Major Elijah Cobb of that town informs me that the people are much divided on the question of offering resistance in case of a demand for tribute. Their artillery company is not in first-class condition and the gallant major is afraid that the two small pieces they have will make a poor showing against the well-armed enemy. There is much capital invested in the salt-making industry there and the proprietors of the works are naturally anxious to avoid a bombardment. They are willing to pay a reasonable sum for immunity."

"They are in the same fix as ourselves," remarked Captain Heman Smith.

"Conditions are practically the same in all the towns from Brewster to Provincetown. The exception, if we may so term it, is Orleans," said the chairman. "There is a majority in that town in favor of armed resistance. I have discussed the matter with Squire Kingman and Major Henry Knowles and they tell me the die is cast—Orleans will fight to the end."

"Orleans is showing great pluck for a young town," said Captain Smith. "Only seventeen years ago it was the South Precinct of Eastham; now it outranks the mother town as a military centre."

"Eastham has lost a lot of its former importance, Captain Smith, but the people of Orleans are still our own flesh and blood," was the chairman's comment on this.

Then Timothy Cole made a suggestion: "I think, Mr. Chairman, we had better postpone a vote until we have an opportunity to judge what the intentions of the schooner are. She will probably work her way eastward tomorrow and we can all take a hand at watching her movements."

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"That seems to be the sensible thing to do, Timothy," assented the chairman.

Timothy's suggestion was received with favor by the meeting and the session was closed.

That night Captain Jared Higgins sat up late. The gallant skipper was busy, but any person observing the task he was engaged in would find it hard to reconcile it with his prominence as an advocate of peace. His family had retired for the night before his labors commenced. The man of peace took an old firelock from the hooks where it had rested untouched for many a year and laid it gently on the table. Then he reached for the ancient cutlass which hung beside the chimney and placed it alongside the gun. From the drawer of an immense cupboard he brought forth two large horse pistols and added them to the weapons on the table. After this, he lighted an extra candle and stood back, grimly surveying the array of warlike gear.

A knock at the door caused Captain Jared to start. Who could be around at this time of night? A second knock and the sound of a friendly voice asking if he were in, brought him to the door which he opened to admit his adversary of the tavern, Obed Sparrow.

"I hope I haven't put you out any, Captain Jared? The fact is, I felt so much ashamed of that evening at Crosby's that I thought it right to come and tell you so. I have been down at Peter's and on my way home I saw your light. I hope there are no hard feelings left, Captain Jared?"

The worthy captain felt his position rather uncomfortable just at that moment. Obed could not fail to notice the lethal weapons on the table and would surely wonder why the man of peace, Jared Higgins, had brought them forth for inspection.

"Don't talk about it, Obed; no hard feelings at all, my lad. These are ticklish times, Obed, and the slowest of us is apt to feel the strain on his temper. Sit down and smoke a pipe."

Obed's eye settled on the table. He certainly was surprised and showed it.

"By George, Captain Jared, but that's a queer sight to see on the table of a man who hates fighting as you do!" he exclaimed.

"Well, Obed," said the captain confusedly, "I just thought I'd have a look at the old kit of fighting tools which I used during the Revolution. Kind o' seemed to me that they wanted cleaning."

"You don't mean to say that you are ever going to use them again, Captain Jared?"

Captain Jared was a man of courage and he required all of it to admit to Obed Sparrow the real reason of the display on the table. But he was equal to the emergency.

"Obed, my lad," answered the captain, without a note of apology in his voice, "as you know, I am in favor of making the best terms possible with the British in view of our being unable to fight them with any prospect of success. I stick to that opinion still, and I want to know if you, a sensible man, don't think me right when you see before you the kind of weapons we have to oppose the first-class arms of the enemy? The cutlass, I admit, is nothing the worse for wear; there is good steel in it and it is not unacquainted with British blood. The old musket, too, in its day was true to its work, but for thirty years it has been on the hooks and I'm afraid its useful days are over. The pistols might still give a good account of themselves at close quarters, but they have been out of action since the night the Barbary pirates boarded us, so, I daresay, they want a lot of brightening up. Bad as these weapons are, Obed, I doubt if any person in Eastham has better ones. And yet, the hotheads of this town are shouting for combat! Why, man, it's just plain suicide!"

The old man's earnestness had its effect on Obed. He was

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silent for a few moments and in his heart he acknowledged that Captain Jared had spoken truth.

"But, Captain Jared, you knew the condition of your weapons; why did you take them out tonight?"

Captain Jared drew himself to his full height as he replied:

"I will tell you why, Obed Sparrow. This, my friend, is a free country, even though this section of it is at present sorely pressed by our old enemy. The will of the people is the supreme power in the land and the Constitution of the United States provides a way for the expression of that will. We may disagree with the decision arrived at, but, as patriotic citizens, we are bound to support the majority. In all public questions the same spirit should be apparent. Now, the people of Eastham are striving to come to a decision as to the best means of saving their town. Some want to fight; others are for compromise. I am one of the latter party. We do not know what the verdict will be, but whatever it is, we must abide by it as one man. I took down my old weapons tonight and was preparing to fix them as well as I could so that I should be found prepared for the conflict in case the people decide to face the enemy sword in hand. That, Obed, is the reason you see those things on the table."

Obed gazed at the old man in speechless admiration. After a long time, he said solemnly: "Captain Jared, you make me ashamed of myself."

"No, my lad, there's nothing to be ashamed of. You are entitled to your own opinion on these matters, but one should never forget that there are always two sides to every question, a fact which many of our neighbors seem to forget."

"Now, Obed," he continued, "I must ask you as a favor not to talk about what you've seen and heard here tonight."

"All right, Captain Jared. And now I must be going, and many thanks for your confidence and advice. Good night, Captain Jared!"

"Good night, Obed, and good luck!"

CHAPTER XIV.

Twenty-Three to One.

The absence of wind kept the schooner at anchor off Brewster for two days. During this time Hoppy Mayo avoided a clash with Dunton, though the latter's surliness was increased by his enforced inactivity. The frigate was expected back any moment now and Dunton knew Captain Raggett would be displeased with the meagre results of the schooner's cruise if she were obliged to remain in idleness off Brewster. However, there was no help for it, and unless a favorable breeze came up the best the surveying party could do would be to send a small boat as far eastward as Orleans creek, a distance of about two miles. Further than this Dunton decided not to risk his men. His naturally suspicious temperament caused him to imagine all sorts of traps laid for him by the accursed Yankees who, he well knew, were watching his every movement from the shore.

On the evening of the second day, the aspect of the sky betokened a change of weather. The atmosphere was very still and the sun went down in a blaze of blood-red radiance. Hoppy was tranquilly smoking his pipe after supper when Dunton approached and said:

"Looks like a change, Mayo? I don't remember having seen such a sunset since I came to this coast."

The American had seen many such sunsets and he knew their meaning. After a keen look at the steel-blue cloud that was showing up over the spot where the sun had disappeared, he answered the officer.

"Yes, Mr. Dunton, it certainly looks as if we were in for one of our summer tempests. I don't like the look of that cloud."

"There is not a breath of air at present, Mayo."

"No, sir; that is one of the signs of a tempest in this local-

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ity. It may not come up until midnight, but we are going to have it before tomorrow morning."

"This is not very safe holding ground in case of a blow," said Dunton somewhat anxiously.

"That's so, Mr. Dunton."

"Well, I'm going below, Mayo, and I want you to remain on deck and watch for a puff that may enable us to get into a better anchorage."

"Very good, sir; I shall call you when it comes."

After Dunton went below Hoppy felt inclined to dance a jig on the deck. Perhaps, after all, his expectations would be fulfilled? Was not this tempest the one thing wanting to hasten the success of the scheme which his wily brain had fashioned during the days of his captivity on the schooner? Twenty-three to one were the odds against him up to this, but with a roaring blow from the northwest as an ally he felt as if he had more than a fighting chance. One blast from the trumpet of the Lord would open the floodgates of the heavens and the pilot's unerring eye had read the message of promise written in the evening sky!

Two junior officers, three seamen and Hoppy made up the watch on deck. One of the seamen, a chap named Jackson, was especially friendly with the pilot and had a great contempt for Dunton. Jackson was a typical old salt; a fine seaman who had spent the greater part of his life in the navy, but he had reached the limit of promotion when he got his rating as able seaman. His fondness for grog had kept him back, though he would not admit the impeachment, preferring to put the blame on his want of influence with such officers as Dunton who, he confided to Hoppy, had a man at their mercy if they took a dislike to him. It was now quite dark and Hoppy, unseen by the officers, managed to have a few words with Jackson.

"I guess you're getting about sick of the calm, Jackson? Looks like a change, though."

"Yes, mate," replied Jackson, "I am. I'm sick of the whole d——d business. There ain't no glory an' there ain't no prize money in this here war. Settin' British sailors to such work as ketchin' rowboats an' fishin' schooners an' then makin' headquarters in a town that ain't got a decent grogshop ain't wot we was used to in the navy."

" 'Tis certainly poor work for brave men, Jackson."

"That it is," assented Jackson vehemently.

"Well, Jackson, as the commanding officer has ordered me to remain on deck to watch with you, I don't see why we shouldn't be as comfortable as we can make ourselves. What do you say to this?" Hopper produced a flask of rum.

"Wot do I say to it, eh? Wot I say is this: If that son of a gun aft don't come on deck an' ketch us, I'd like to jine you all right!"

"No fear of that, Jackson; he won't come on deck until I call him. Help yourself!"

"After you, mate; I ain't forgot my manners."

"Here's luck, Jackson!"

"Same to you, my hearty, an' many of 'em!"

Then the gallant tar took his turn at the flask. Lovingly he held the generous liquor to his lips and quenched his thirst with a long drink.

"Blest if it ain't mighty good of you, mate!" said Jackson gratefully. "That fellow aft don't know how to treat men, an' there's a lot o' growlin' among the crew."

"That's a wonder, Jackson, and there's no reason why he should be stingy about the grog. There's enough of it aboard."

"Then he's a d——d liar!" hissed Jackson. "He sent word to the foesle that the supply o' rum aboard was small an' that the allowance must be cut down!"

"Of course, Jackson, it isn't my place to interfere, and perhaps I was wrong in mentioning the matter?"

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"Oh, don't you fret about your doin' wrong, mate. You've done right, an' by the Lord Harry, when I tell some o' them about his meanness an' lyin', there'll be hell to pay! There's old Bill Brown will be hoppin' about it. Only yesterday, old Bill says to me: 'Damme,' says Bill, 'I've been threatenin' to desert ever since we kem on this here station but I've been held back 'cause I hated to leave the old flag. But, by G——,' (Bill's a orful swearer) 'if this feller deals out short allowance o' grog, I'm finished with King George!' "

"It's a shame, Jackson. Don't tell any of the men that I have given you a drink. Dunton would be sure to hear of it and that would be the end of the game. I know where there's a good supply stowed away and I can get at it; so, if you keep the matter to yourself, I may be able to let you have a good drink occasionally."

"All right, my hearty; you can trust me with a secret. Faet of it is, mate, the crew don't think anything the worse o' you for bein' a Yank. They know Dunton's down on you, but he's obliged to keep a civil tongue just now. Old Dick Raggett has given him orders to treat you decent."

"I thought there was something strange about his civility, Jackson, and I'm much obliged to you for telling me the reason. What do you say to another swallow?"

Jackson had no objection at all, so he took a copious draught which put him in high spirits.

Hoppy again warned him to be silent about the rum and went aft.

The stillness of the atmosphere continued and the night was intensely dark. From his station Hoppy closely watched the western sky. The deluge would soon be upon them and already he noticed faint streaks of lightning near the horizon. Everything seemed to favor him. He had secured the goodwill of Jackson and would be able to use him when the right moment

arrived. The watch officers, also seeing the lightning, asked him if he thought it advisable to call Dunton's attention to it, but Hoppy replied that his orders were not to call the commander until there were signs of a breeze.

"It's no use waking him, Mr. Jenkins. If we're going to run for better holding ground we must wait for wind, and we shan't have any for some time yet."

"Very well, Mayo; but if a sudden squall should strike us, Mr. Dunton won't be pleased to be below."

"There will be no sudden squall, Mr. Jenkins. These summer tempests don't come up like that. The lightning is far off yet and, anyway, we can't get any steerage way on her until we get some wind."

This appeared to satisfy the young men and they left Hoppy to his cogitations.

When half an hour had passed, Dunton came on deck. He was evidently ill at ease and could not remain below. His eye caught the gleaming shafts of lightning to the westward and he knew that the tempest predicted by the pilot would be a furious one.

"The wind still seems to be shy, Mayo?"

"Oh, it's coming, all right, Mr. Dunton, but you won't feel it for another hour. The lightning still hugs the horizon."

"It will mean a night on deck for all hands. I think you had better turn in for a rest, Mayo; I shall want you when the storm strikes us."

"Very good, sir, and thank you for your consideration."

In accordance with Raggett's orders Hoppy's berth was in the cabin with the officers. Dunton dared not object to this though he didn't like the idea of having the prisoner established in his quarters.

Hoppy went below but he did not turn in. Sleep was not in his program that night. Making sure that he was unobserved,

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he made a cautious but thorough search of the cabin, paying particular attention to Dunton's berth. In the midst of his investigations he heard Dunton calling for him to come on deck and he knew by the trampling of feet above him that the longed-for breeze had come. With a smile he obeyed the commander's call.

There was bustle everywhere on deck. Dunton was shouting orders and while some of the men were getting the anchor aboard others were busy at the sails. A crash of thunder greeted the pilot's appearance on the scene. Though the breeze was still gentle, it was gathering strength every moment and soon the schooner would feel its full force.

"This is your business, pilot," said Dunton. "I want to get the schooner into a good anchorage and I depend on you to show me where that is."

"Aye, aye, sir," cried Hoppy; "we must run her under the lee of Billingsgate Point! That's about as safe as any place in this nor'wester."

Under a storm jib and close-reefed foresail the little craft was headed for the Point. The lightning was now vivid and the crashing thunder was deafening. The long rollers from the ocean were breaking into white crests and the boom of the sea on the sandbars was heard at intervals through the elemental fury of the heavens. The rain fell in torrents and the wind increased to a gale which drove the schooner through the seething waters with tremendous force and would have overwhelmed her were it not for the splendid seamanship displayed by Hoppy Mayo. There was then no lighthouse on Billingsgate Point to guide them and the darkness of the night added to the terrors of the storm, but the pilot assured Dunton that he could make the anchorage all right, though he could not even then guarantee that the schooner would be out of danger.

The distance they had to run was about eight miles. When

Hoppy's calculations led him to believe that they were nearing the Point, he brought the schooner to the wind and ordered the anchor overboard. The strain on the stout cable was fearful but it held, and though the vessel was battered on all sides by the rollers she swung to her anchor in apparent safety for the moment.

There was not much said during all this time, for the simple reason that the shrieking gale and the general turmoil made it difficult for any one to be heard, and the few orders given had to be shouted from man to man until the proper person was reached, but Hoppy conveyed to Dunton that this was the best he could do and that they must take their chances in this spot as long as the cable held and the gale continued.

The reader may wonder why the Cape Codder took such pains to bring the schooner to a place of comparative safety, but it must be kept in mind that Hoppy had no desire to risk his life by leaving the situation in charge of the British who knew nothing of the dangers of the locality; and besides, everything was working in favor of a triumphant conclusion to the scheme which was uppermost in his mind. The storm had altered his plans in some particulars, but it had improved his chances wonderfully and, indeed, the hardy pilot inwardly exulted when he felt assured that there would be no change in the weather until far into the night.

CHAPTER XV.

Quits!

There was no rest that night for the men on board the schooner. The gale continued with unabated fury, momentarily threatening destruction to the vessel, and Dunton knew that if the cable broke all hands would be required at once to try and work her off the Wellfleet shore, which was under their lee. The darkness and the absence of guiding lights on the land made him uncertain of his position, though a cast of the lead showed a safe depth of water.

To add to his discomfort, Dunton was aware that, through an oversight, the schooner had only one large anchor to depend on. It may be said that Hoppy Mayo also knew that there was but one anchor fit for the occasion, but, for reasons of his own, he suffered no anxiety on that point.

The pilot felt that the supreme hour of his life was at hand. He had faith in himself and in the justness of his cause. He refused to entertain the thought that the Arbiter of all things would decide against him in his struggle with his foes: but, whatever the outcome, he was determined to meet the end undauntedly as became a true American sailor.

Dunton shouted through the storm:

“It will be high water at two o’clock, Mayo; there may be a change of weather on the ebb?”

“I hope so, Mr. Dunton, and I believe there will be some abatement of the wind at half tide. This storm seems to be a double-decker; that last crash of thunder shows there’s more behind it.”

Then a big wave struck the vessel and she shivered at the blow. Some of the hands were thrown on the deck and narrowly escaped being washed overboard.

"By George, Mr. Dunton!" cried Hoppy, "that was a bad one! It's a wonder to me how that cable stands the strain. Shouldn't be surprised if it went under another blow like that last one!"

The same thought was in Dunton's mind and he could not conceal his anxiety.

"I suppose you know, Mayo, that we haven't another anchor fit to hold her in this weather?"

"By the Lord! you don't say so? Then it's a mighty poor show if we lose this one."

"Is there no creek or small harbor on this cursed coast where we could take refuge?"

Hoppy expected the question and he was prepared with an answer. After a pause he said:

"Well, Mr. Dunton, there's nothing to leeward that you could call a harbor, but there's a small inlet to the south of us and if the cable snaps our only chance will be to run for it."

"But how are you to find it in this darkness?"

"It will soon be dawn, Mr. Dunton; in about an hour's time, I should say. If we're lucky enough to hold on till then we may make it. Once over the outer bar we shall be safe."

Dunton had to be satisfied with this, though the prospect was a poor one. He asked Hoppy how they were to moor the schooner in case they lost the heavy anchor? The pilot told him that there would be smooth water inside the outer bar and that a light anchor would do.

Sea after sea kept pounding the vessel. As the time was near for decisive action, Hoppy suggested to Dunton that it would be well to pay out a few more fathoms of cable.

"It will ease her a bit, Mr. Dunton; I'll make my way forward and see that it runs out all right."

Dunton agreed. Hoppy groped his way to the bow where he crouched unobserved in the gloom. Dunton gave the order to

pay out, but just then a curious thing happened. Hoppy drew his keen knife from its sheath and slashed the stout rope in such a manner that he knew it would soon part. On his way aft he managed to have a few words with Jackson.

The night was drawing to a close. The first faint streaks of dawn were appearing and the pilot drew Dunton's attention to them:

"Day is coming, Mr. Dunton; I think there's a slight break in the gale."

And so it seemed. There was a perceptible lessening of the schooner's motion and Dunton felt relieved.

Suddenly a shout that the cable had parted arose and for some time the utmost confusion prevailed. The vessel fell off before the wind which had shifted a point to the north.

"Our only chance is to run for it, Mr. Dunton," cried Hoppy. "I think we had better make for the inlet, though it must be shallow water on the outer bar now!"

The storm jib was set and the schooner plunged forward, Hoppy at the wheel. It was now sufficiently clear to distinguish the shore. The appearance of the sky denoted a change near though the gale was still strong.

Hoppy held her head in the direction of what he called the inlet. It could not be much of an inlet, was Dunton's thought, for as far as the eye could range along shore there was nothing but a stretch of surf-beaten beach.

"Not much of a harbor, Mayo?"

"You will see it better in a short time, Mr. Dunton."

Onward raced the schooner and the sea was surely getting smoother as she approached the land. When about half a mile from it, Hoppy ran her right into the wind's eye and with a shock the little craft stood still.

"What's that for, Mayo?" demanded Dunton suspiciously.

"It means, Mr. Dunton," replied Hoppy coolly, "that we are aground on the outer bar."

"Then what are we going to do now?"

"We were a bit too late to catch enough water for crossing. We must now wait for the next tide to enable us to get off."

"But what's going to happen meanwhile?"

"The schooner will be all right where she is," replied the pilot. "However, I should advise you to send your men below, Mr. Dunton, so that the people on shore may not get suspicious at seeing such a large crew."

As the vessel was stuck fast in the sand there seemed no alternative but to follow Hoppy's advice; so, reluctantly, Dunton ordered the men below. Hoppy caught Jackson's eye and that worthy winked significantly. The convivial tar waved his hand in salute as he followed his mates below. Dunton and his two subordinate officers remained on deck with the pilot.

The storm was almost over and the British commander cursed his bad luck in not having been able to hold on to his anchor. Here, he was in a bad predicament, held fast on the treacherous flats and obliged to wait for hours until the flood tide floated the schooner. The hated Yankees ashore would soon discover his plight and, perhaps, muster sufficient force to seize his vessel, making prisoners of all on board. The gloomy prospect affected Dunton's nerves and he longed to vent his spleen on the pilot, but he had no evidence whatever that the latter had not acted in good faith.

As the daylight got stronger a few men were observed on the beach. Hoppy knew that they were the forerunners of the crowd which would soon be on the scene.

The tide was ebbing fast and the schooner would soon be high and dry on the flats. Then the pilot must strike the final blow on which he depended for victory. He was not afraid of the result. There had been no setback to his plans up to the present and he felt confident that within the hour Dunton and his men would be prisoners of war.

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The schooner, feeling the want of the supporting tide, heeled over. Dunton on the quarterdeck was dividing his attention between the increasing crowd on the beach and the movements of the pilot. The latter seemed to be examining the brass four pounder with great curiosity. To Dunton it looked as if Hoppy had it in his mind to train the piece on the beach, but that idea vanished quickly when he saw the bold Cape Codder deliberately spike the gun!

"Treason, by G——!" he shouted as he made a rush forward. Hoppy gave the spike a clinching blow and turned on the officer.

"Stand back there, Dunton!" he cried fiercely. "Stand back there! and keep a civil tongue in your mouth, you d—d swab!"

Hoppy had snatched a boarding pike from the rack and Dunton paused irresolutely before the weapon.

"Halt!" cried the American.

Dunton faced him. The officer was no coward, but the suddenness of the whole thing was disconcerting and he was puzzled how to proceed.

"This vessel is American property, Dunton; she now reverts to her rightful owners!"

Dunton did not reply. He looked at Jenkins and the latter disappeared into the cabin. Hoppy laughed mockingly as the junior reappeared looking decidedly crestfallen.

"Your pistols are not in your writing case, sir."

This was too much for Dunton. His features were distorted with passion and he hurled a volley of vile language at the American.

"Avast there, you swab!" roared Hoppy; "another man so near death as you are would be saying his prayers instead of using filthy talk!"

"All hands, ahoy!" screamed Dunton.

"Aye, you may call them, my bold fellow, but they couldn't hear even Gabriel's trumpet now!"

And so it was. Hoppy had told Jackson where to find the cask of rum in the hold and that gallant seaman had tapped it with a gimlet, inviting his messmates to partake, which they did with gusto. They were worn out from the long vigil through the night and copious libations of the fiery liquor soon stupefied them. They lay like dead men in the hold.

The baffled officer turned on his subordinates, "Where are your pistols?" he demanded.

"They can't be found, sir," answered Jenkins.

Then Hoppy enlightened him. "You need not worry about your pistols, Dunton; they are in safe keeping. And now, I'm going to be busy for a few minutes and I want you to be a good boy until I have time to attend to your troubles."

Near the mainmast there was a large chest containing arms. It was locked, but Hoppy smashed it open with an axe and started to throw the muskets and cutlasses overboard. This made Dunton almost insanely furious. Calling on his officers to help he rushed at Hoppy who whipped out a pistol which he leveled at the advancing Englishman.

"Another step and you are a dead man!" he thundered. "And you, Jenkins and Thomson, stand back! You are decent fellows and I don't want to kill you, but, by the Almighty, if you don't stay quiet, I'll have you all three buried in Yankee soil tomorrow!"

The assailants drew back. Hoppy opened his jacket and displayed an array of pistols stuck in his belt.

"These are your pistols," said he, "and I may tell you later how I got them; but, for the present, you must be satisfied to know that they are all loaded and that makes more than a bullet apiece for you. If you don't believe me, watch this!"

He fired and the bullet struck the deck at Dunton's feet.

"I can afford to waste one shot," he continued, "but it is the only one that will be wasted if you don't keep quiet!"

He then finished the work of throwing the arms into the sea.

"That's a good job satisfactorily done. Now I have a few

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words to say, Dunton, and when you hear them you will know how we stand. You and your men are my prisoners. The schooner is my prize. I have no desire to treat you harshly, though you must feel that I owe you nothing in the way of civility. My people, as you can see, are now in force on the beach, and when the flats are dry, as they will be in a short time, I shall deliver you to the proper authorities in Eastham. However, I want you to know that I have had no help from any of your men in this business. They obliged me by getting drunk, and you have yourself to blame for that. If you hadn't defrauded them of their proper allowance of grog they might be sober now! Captain Raggett treated me decently and for his sake I shall see that you have nothing to complain of ashore. Now you understand?"

"You're a d——d traitor and you'll suffer for this when the frigate returns!" cried Dunton venomously.

"That reminds me, Dunton, of what you said when we had that little conversation at Provincetown. 'No back talk from prisoners,' I think you remarked? As to being a traitor," here the American's eyes flashed and his tone became hard, "well, that's according to the way you look at it. A traitor to what? Why, man, you show your stupidity by saying so! You thought because I made no fuss about becoming your pilot that you had me on your side! When I consented, Dunton, it was with the firm intention that this schooner and all on board should find a resting place at the bottom of Cape Cod bay if I found no other way out. You should thank God for the storm; it surely saved your lives! It was a case of one man against twenty-three and the one man had only his wits to depend on—but he won! One Yankee licked twenty-three Britishers! How will that news be received on the "Spencer," Dunton? There, I have said enough for the present and I'm not going to gloat over your defeat."

There was no answer from the beaten and humiliated Dunton.

CHAPTER XVI.

Conclusion.

The news of Hoppy Mayo's exploit caused intense excitement in Eastham and the neighboring towns. The Orleans militia company and the Brewster artillery hastened to the Eastham beach and assisted in guarding the captured British. The prisoners were escorted to Crosby's tavern where they were hospitably entertained. The remainder of the cask of rum was brought ashore and it was welcomed by all those who liked a gill. At first, the British tars were bewildered in their strange surroundings when they recovered from the debauch of the morning, but they accepted the new conditions in the best possible spirit and were soon on the friendliest terms with their captors. Local tradition in Eastham has preserved the memory of that night of revelry at Crosby's when friend and foe clasped hands and clinked glasses as brothers. Phil the Fifer lilted his merriest notes and Peter Walker's ballads were sung and evoked enthusiastic applause from all hands.

Hoppy was hailed as the hero of the hour. He bore his honors with great modesty and disclaimed any extraordinary merit for the part he had played.

Win Knowles had not yet returned to Eastham and some were of opinion that there was something queer about his failure to return to the "Spencer," but Hoppy strenuously maintained that Win had acted wisely, as his chances of doing any good with the money were slight. Besides, he had told Win not to feel anxious about the matter.

Hoppy gave a full account of his adventure to the Committee of Safety. The worthy chairman warmly expressed the Committee's appreciation of their townsman's gallantry and resourcefulness, but he had grave doubts about Captain Raggett's attitude when the news should reach him. He would surely

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exact retribution for an act which humiliated the pride of King George's navy.

It is no part of our present purpose to describe minutely the difficulties which followed the arrival of the "Spencer." We feel that this story may fitly end with the triumph of Hoppy Mayo; but, for those who are unacquainted with the story of the Cape during the war of 1812, it may not be amiss to quote the Rev. Enoch Pratt, historian of Eastham: "The commander sent a barge, and demanded of the town twelve hundred dollars in specie, threatening that, if it was not paid in twenty-four hours, he would land with a force sufficient to burn, indiscriminately, the vessels, dwelling-houses and salt-works of the inhabitants."

After protracted negotiations, the reverend historian tells us, this was agreed to, and the British gave a written promise not to molest the town further during the war.

There was much criticism of the Committee of Safety for this compliance with the British demand, but a majority of the people upheld the decision. Tribute was also paid by the town of Brewster, but the people of Orleans indignantly refused to capitulate and stubbornly and successfully resisted all attempts of the enemy to land on their shore.

The end of the year 1814 saw the conclusion of hostilities on Cape Cod. The stout warrior, Old Diek Raggett, sailed away for England, and with him went that gallant and courteous officer, Herbert Fotheringay.

After the war, Eastham greatly increased in prosperity. Uncle Jabez Rich soon succumbed to the infirmities of his great age, but most of the worthy citizens mentioned in our story enjoyed the blessings of peace and plenty for many years and left sturdy descendants to perpetuate their names. Crosby's famous tavern no longer exists to afford the local gossips a meeting place; it is now a comfortable farmhouse, and the inquiring stranger can still be shown the apartment in which the captured British sailors held high revel with their Yankee captors.

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